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BIOGRAPHY.

BRIEF MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. JOHN KIDDEL; BY  
DR. TOULMIN.

Mr. JOHN KIDDEL, a native academical studies under the Rev. of Tiverton, in Devonshire, was John Moore, M. A. who, for born in 1721. It is probable that many years, presided over a seminary at Bridgewater, in Somersetshire. He finished them under the learned Mr. John Eames, at London. In this latter part of his academical course, he was favoured with the friendship and free conversation of Dr. Watts. On finishing it, he returned to his native town; and in 1742, on the death of Mr. Joseph Pyke, a respectable minister and a man of polite address, he and Mr. John Rudge were ordained pastors of the congregation at the Pitt meeting-house, and alternately officiated to that and to another congregation at Puddington. Mr. Rudge died 20th September, 1748, when the pastoral care of the former congregation, then numerous and respectable, devolved on Mr. Kiddel. He continued in this connection forty-five years, till 1787. In the mean time, the society was much reduced by

"Skill'd in all tongues, see Rayner  
treads the stage:

Severe his virtue—awful in his age,  
While others follow all the musty  
rules

Of barb'rous monks, or slow phleg-  
matic fools;

From ev'ry weed, lo! Rayner clears  
the ground;

And in his grammar all the man is  
found."

Mr. Kiddel commenced his  
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death and various concurring circumstances. "Amongst others," says the accurate historian of Tiverton, "occasional conformity at first to the Test and Corporation Acts, to qualify them to become members of the corporation, was a means of drawing many respectable families away from that meeting to a constant attendance on the service of the Church of England."\* In the year just mentioned, he received an invitation to fill the department of the domestic classical tutor in the newly-raised academy at Hackney. The proposal was honourable to his talents and learning, and it offered at a time when, from a distressing state of his finances, it was peculiarly seasonable and consolatory. An elder son, on whose success in a mercantile concern he rested his hopes for the other branches of his family, had met with misfortunes, in which his father's small fortune was lost. Such respect had Mr. Kiddel's character secured, such cordial friendship had his virtues conciliated, such a generous sympathy did his affliction create, a subscription was immediately opened in the town, for the relief of his present necessities, and to form a fund for his own and his family's future benefit. It met with cheerful encouragement, and liberal aids to it came from the remoter neighbourhood and distant quarters. But the result of this kind service did not set him above the advantages that a new situation promised; and the growing incapacities of declining years made it desirable to exchange the laborious task of a grammar school, which

he had for many years conducted with great reputation, for the more liberal employment of assisting the progress of young gentlemen, whose powers were already opened, in reading the higher classics. Mr. Kiddel continued in this employment till the seminary was broken up. The curators of it, attentive to the situation into which he would be cast, made a provision to compensate to him the want of the salary, which had been connected with his employment. After this, Mr. Kiddel resided some time at Bath, and since in London. He died at Hackney, on the 4th of April, 1810, after he had, by a gradual decay of strength and faculties, for several years been tending to a dissolution.

A friend, who knew how to appreciate his talents and worth, and who esteemed him highly, said of Mr. Kiddel twenty years ago,

"Few men have lived in Tiverton that have been more assiduous in their researches after knowledge, more diligent and impartial in their inquiries after truth, or more studious to dispel the clouds of ignorance and superstition, the mists of prejudice, and the undue influence of human authority in matters of religion: few men have been more earnest to enlighten the minds of his hearers, to exhibit the plain, genuine principles, and to enforce the divine precepts, of the gospel, or to exemplify the Christian character: and few men have lived in Tiverton whose conversation hath been more instructive or entertaining, and whose company has been more pleasing or generally sought."†

When an attempt was made, in 1753, at the assembly of ministers for the united counties of Devon and Cornwall, to revive the inquisitorial powers, which had thirty years before marked the proceed-

\* Dunstond's Historical Memoirs of Tiverton, p. 369. note 259.

† *Ibid.*

ings of that body, on the Trinitarian controversy; and the question was put, "Whether the Assembly shall recommend any candidate to ordination, who will not declare his faith in the deity of the Son and the Holy Ghost?"

Mr. Kiddel gave his decided negative against putting the question.\* A frank and open opposition to sacerdotal usurpation and power, formed a distinguishing trait in his character.

"I am a dissenter," said he; "I glory in the name; and, as such, am attached to no interest besides that of virtue and my redeemer; and, therefore, shall never think myself bound to support, right or wrong, the reputation of whole bodies of men. I can value a good man wherever I see him: I can embrace truth wherever I find it; but, by the grace of God, I will never lift a finger to the support of a sacerdotal faction, nor be fettered with the claims of an ecclesiastical tyranny."†

In the same discourse in which he delivered these sentiments, he displayed his liberality of spirit in the solicitude he expressed, that all men might be led to make a just estimate of the true dignity of the ministerial character, which, in his judgment, depended wholly on a careful and diligent examination of the divine records, and a faithful representation of the genuine truths of the sacred oracles.‡

"It is," said he, "the universal concern of Christians, of the laity as well as of the clergy, to be well acquainted with the dignity and design of the ministerial character, with the duties and obligations belonging to it, and with the authority and powers annexed to it; because, though this office when rightly discharged has the most friendly influence upon the virtue and happiness of

mankind, and becomes most extensively useful; yet, if abused, it cannot but be attended with the most malignant consequences. It is, therefore, the business of all men to keep the strictest eye upon the public teachers of religion; lest, while by an affected humility they call themselves the servants of God, of virtue, and of mankind, they exalt themselves above all that is called God, vilify religion, and enslave the world."§

These quotations place his conduct and aims, as a Christian minister, in a very respectable point of view. In that character he united great learning, a sound judgment, a firm integrity, and rational piety. His undisguised, manly, and polite address, commanded respect in the intercourses of life. His openness of temper, cordiality and warmth of manner, attached his friends to him. He secured, by his relative and domestic virtues, no small share of love and respect. He passed his life very much in the confined circle of a country town, and in the retirements of his study and a school: but he was held in high estimation beyond those limits, and among his friends were to be enumerated the Rev. Micajah Towgood, of Exeter; Matthew Towgood, Esq. his son; Dr. Harris, the historian; Dr. Joseph Jeffries, professor of civil law at Gresham College; and others whose partial regards would reflect honour on any man.

Mr. Kiddel published a sermon "On the Dignity of the Ministerial Character, preached before the Assembly at Exon, May 6, 1747," from the Preface to which we have selected some passages.

\* *Monthly Repository*, vol. iv. p. 253.

† Preface to a Sermon before an Assembly of Ministers, p. iii.

‡ See his Tract on the Inspiration of the Scriptures, p. 71.

§ The Preface before quoted, p. 2.



Through those passages, and from different parts of this very sensible, animated, and valuable discourse, it is evident that the preacher had given umbrage to some, who felt the reflections pointed against high priestly claims, and against the imposition of metaphysical and absurd confessions of faith, as levelled at themselves; and who overlooked the sentiments of honest faithfulness, exalted virtue, and of a pure and heavenly temper, which were diffused through the discourse.

The concluding paragraphs of the Preface confirm this suspicion, and show the spirit of the preacher.

"To be indifferent to all parties," he says, "I am sensible is not the way to popularity or preferment. But I can truly say, that I desire none of those wages of unrighteousness; and if for this my conduct I should suffer from the hands of ignorant and furious bigots, though many should sneer at and ridicule my system of politics, yet the poet has furnished me with an answer:

Meâ  
Virtute me involvo probamque  
Pauperiem sine dolo, quaero.\*

"And amidst all the discouragements which I meet with, mankind shall never lose my hearty prayers for their liberty and happiness.

"May, therefore, the time come, when the learning, virtue, and usefulness of ministers shall be more regarded than the surplices and mitres which they wear; when the outcries and animosities raised concerning modern orthodoxy and heresy shall cease, and practical holiness and solid goodness become the general concern of men; when human creeds and established forms of faith shall be banished from the world, and the interest of the Redeemer and the religion of the New Testament be alone contended for. Amen and Amen."

In 1760, Mr. Kiddel gave the public from the press a Thanks-giving Sermon.

In 1779 appeared a tract from

his pen, entitled "The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures asserted and explained, in Three Dissertations; in which a plain and rational solution is attempted to be given to the following inquiries:

I. What *Scriptures* are *divinely* inspired?

II. In what *sense* the Holy *Scriptures* are so?

And III. What *proof* we have of it?"

Some of the principal parts of these Dissertations had been delivered in the form of a sermon before the assembly of ministers at Exon; and the publication of it was requested. The author judiciously preferred giving the subject a more full discussion than the limits of a sermon allowed. These Dissertations met with much approbation, and Dr. Kippis has inserted them in the references to authors, with which he has improved the third edition of Dr. Doddridge's Lectures. Our author's leading principles were, that "the end of the divine inspiration of the sacred writers, in their compositions, was, that what was written by them might be kept free from all error and falsehood; contain nothing but pure, genuine, and unadulterated truth, and be received and believed as of infallible certainty, sealed and attested by the authority of God; that whatever influence was sufficient to answer this end, was sufficient to answer all the purposes of a divine inspiration; that the same degrees of influence are not necessary and expedient to all the sacred writers alike; that, therefore, divine inspiration, when

\* Horace, L. 3. Ode 29,



applied to different writers, must admit of different senses and limitations. These principles are considered and opened with respect to the different subjects and nature of the sacred writings, as historical, moral, and devotional and prophetic; including under the latter term, not predictions only, but truths above the investigation of our own reason and all positive institutions and ordinances of religion. In the discussion of the subject, the inquiry, whether the words and language of Scripture are by divine inspiration, comes under examination. Here Mr. Kiddel observes,

"If the whole were penned in the very words and language of the Holy Spirit, we might have expected to have found all the Scriptures written in a language uniformly pure and perfect; and carrying with it, as the doctrines of revelation do, plain marks and characters of its divine original, and above the common capacities of mere men; but nothing of this appears. The style is very various, and suitable to the different characters and acquirements of the several authors; and accompanied with many imperfections and defects, in the same manner as all other writings of human composition are."

This piece does credit to Mr. Kiddel's pen, judgment, and spirit. The same disdain of art and insincerity, the same aversion to sacerdotal tyranny, mark it, as breathe through the sermon which we have quoted.

"When a minister of the gospel," says he, "takes this book," i. e. the Scriptures, "into his hands, it ought

to be with the deepest reverence of its truths, and with a lively sense of how great importance it is to his people to entertain just sentiments and a right knowledge of those truths. He must not be guilty of any artful concealments and misrepresentations, in order to accommodate himself to the popular opinions, the misguided humours, or criminal passions of men. Nay, he must not consult the pre-conceived opinions of those who attend on his ministry: that, on the one hand, he may avoid giving them offence; or, on the other, that he may favour their prejudices and gain their applause. If he thus pleases men, he will not be the servant of Christ."

It is to be regretted, that a gentleman of Mr. Kiddel's learning, liberality, and judgment, had not in a larger work, or more frequently, addressed the public from the press. The writer of this knows, that some years ago he meant to have published an Essay on the Divine Appearances to the Patriarchs. What prevented the execution of that purpose he cannot say; but, if the MS. be not lost, though the nature of the subject might not encourage the expectation of a profitable sale, it would, if Mr. Kiddel's family would give leave, be a valuable article for the Monthly Repository: and the communication of it through that channel, would be a tribute of respect to the author's memory, and a lasting monument of his talents and name.

J. TOULMIN.

*Birmingham, May 17, 1810.*

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF SERVETUS, IN LETTERS TO THE REV.  
JEDEDIAH MORSE, D. D.—LETTER IV.

*Dec. 12, 1807.*

Rev. and respected Sir,

That it is not an easy task to decide upon the characters of men, or to apprise always with

exactness the value of their merits, or to bring to light the impelling motives of any insulated action, cannot between us become a matter of controversy. The

animosity between Calvin and Servetus, with its fatal, never-too-much-lamented issue to the latter, seem utterly inexplicable, if we dive not deeper than the mere narrative of the doleful catastrophe.

It seems inexplicable in many respects, with regard to that great and excellent reformer, whose memory will be endeared to all, (though averse to consider the burning of Servetus with bishop Hall\* in him as meritorious,) who value super-eminent talents and religion; who, with humble adoration, revere the means which Providence in its wisdom thought proper to employ to accomplish the illustrious work of the reformation: and, nevertheless, proofs, strong as charity could require, shall evince his condemnation in more than one regard by any impartial inquirer.

Calvin and Servetus were gifted by Providence with uncommon talents. Both made considerable progress in various branches of literature, far above the mass of literati of that highly-interesting period. Calvin was pretty generally considered, and deserved to be distinguished as the prince of the learned; and, after the death of Zuinglius, as the chief of the reformed, by all who either approved openly or secretly the reformation; while even they who in their hearts disapproved some of his speculative opinions, as Servetus, Blandrata, Socinus, Gentilis, left nothing untried to ingratiate themselves with him; and the most eminent among the Roman Catholics, as Sadolet and others, paid a voluntary tribute to his exalted merits.

Calvin and Servetus had both a lively sense of their own importance; were of a fierce, control-disdaining disposition. The one had all the haughtiness of his proud countrymen; the other, the quickly irascible temper of his native country, high-toned through the lofty notions of his democratic residence. Calvin would not listen, but imperiously command; and would have been gratified to see a Servetus, a Socinus, at his feet, to be imbued with wisdom from his lips. Servetus would not yield to any man, and deemed opposition to his dictates a crime. Both were animated with an ardent zeal for truth: both had persuaded themselves, that they stood forward in, and avenged the cause of their God and Lord. What wonder, then, that Servetus was crushed by Calvin? No more, than that Calvin might have shared a similar fate, if their circumstances had been reversed, and Calvin's power lodged in the hands of Servetus. Though you, Sir, will not question the ardent zeal of John Calvin, that of Servetus might seem to you more problematical, which scruple I shall remove in the course of this letter. May I only beg you, Sir, not to consider now if Servetus erred, not if his opinions were founded in truth or damnable heresies, neither if he was tinctured by fanaticism; but alone, if he acted with sincerity, and believed in his heart what he professed as the gospel doctrine.

Who can doubt his confidence in God, and glowing zeal for his glory, who considers with attention his prayer? "O Christ Je-

\* *Treatise on Moderation.*

us, Son of God! who, given us from heaven, manifestest visibly in thyself the revealed Deity; discover thyself to thy servant, that such a grand manifestation may be truly known. Give me, I pray thee, thy good spirit and efficacious word; control my mind and my pen, that I may express the glory of thy divinity, and declare the true faith about thee. It is thy cause, when I explain thy glory from the Father, with that of thy spirit, which it has been given me to explain by a divine impulse, when I was anxious about thy truth. Once I made a beginning to treat this subject; now again I feel myself impelled to the task, as the time is actually fulfilled, which I shall show to all the pious, from the manifest signs of the times. Thou hast instructed us that we may not abscond our light, so that I must pronounce a woe upon me, if I do not preach the gospel. It is the common cause of all Christians, which to maintain they all are obliged.\*

"Enable thy servant, thy soldier, that he, through thy power, may be enabled to fight manfully against the dragon, the serpent, the devil, who had given power to the beast, i. e. Pope."† To which may be joined that he, seeing the danger to which he had exposed himself, expressed himself in a letter to Pepin, one of the ministers of Geneva: "I know, certainly, I must die for that cause, but, therefore, I do not become low spirited, that I, as a disciple, may resemble my master." And this his apprehension was not vain,

as he knew that the book, upon whose publication he was firmly resolved, must be a stumbling-block to the Protestants as well as Roman Catholics, all whom he branded with idolatry; while he could have no prospect of remaining concealed, although it did not bear his name, as he was known by his other works, and had even declared his name in this singular manner:—"See—there he is—it is Servetus, whom I searched for: here! here! what does he speak with you?"‡

This was Servetus, who, when at Lyons, entered into an unfortunate correspondence with Calvin, then a minister at Geneva, which correspondence had since between these learned men been long continued; through which, however, they were rather exasperated against one another than reconciled. From Lyons and Dauphiné, Servetus wrote thirty letters to Calvin upon this and other important subjects, afterwards inserted in *Restit. Christianismi*, p. 577. from which letters it appears, that many of them are answers to letters of John Calvin; and further, that Servetus did not, so incessantly, slander Calvin in these as he had been accused, while Calvin's subsequent behaviour makes it more than doubtful, if he bore Servetus's obloquy with such modesty and meekness as he pretended.||

Servetus addressed first three questions to Calvin, to which he answered, viz.

1. If the man Jesus, who was crucified, was the Son of God,

\* Pref. *Restit. Christian.*

† Lib. i. p. 3.

‡ Diss. i. de Trin. p. 66.

|| Calvin's *Fidelis Expos. Errorum Serveti Op.* p. 696. ed. Geneva, in fol. 1597, and Calvin's Answers, from p. 697—704.



and what was the reason of this sonship?

2. If the kingdom of God was in man, when one entered into it, and when such a one was regenerated?

3. If the baptism instituted by Christ was to be done with faith, as in the (Lord's) Supper, and with what view they were instituted in the New Covenant?

It is wondrous strange, Sir, that Calvin did not preserve, or did not produce the first letter of Servetus, which might have spread some more light upon their contest. Servetus sent, after a while, a MS. to Calvin, in which he made many free strictures on Calvin's book of *Institutions*. This treatise is not published, but its summary ingredients have, as it seems, been inserted in his *Restitutio Christianismi*. This, we may conclude from the conclusion of the second letter: "I pray God, that you may condescend to read again the 4th book on Baptism, as it seems you have not perused it. God have pity upon us. Amen."

From this correspondence originated chiefly their animosities, which since that period were manifested in all Calvin's writings, even in his comment upon the Scriptures.\*

Among the early proofs of Calvin's rancour against Servetus, is adduced a letter to Viret and another to Farell, both in 1546. "I hear that Servetus intends to come hither to converse with me; but, if I have any influence with

the magistrate, I shall effect that he never return alive." This fact is not denied by Sennebier, but totally misrepresented, as if Calvin concluded that such would be the fatal consequence, from the spirit of the laws and the government of Geneva, and from the ideas of all sects at that time; whereas Calvin bore Servetus a perfect goodwill, as long as there was any hope of his recovery. A similar explanation corroborates the facts, to which no man of Sennebier's talents would have recurred, could he have proved it false. Although this answer leaves no room to reply for Sennebier, it deserves, however, our candid examination.

Bolzec, Calvin's bitter antagonist, and Varillas assert, that these letters are genuine; but Bolzec and Varillas deserve little credit, whenever the facts attested cannot be verified from more pure sources, although it deserves some consideration, that Bolzec declared that the letter to Viret had *actually* been delivered to the magistrate of Bern. But, Sir, Sam. Sorberius,† H. Grotius,‡ and Vitenbogaerd,|| men of consummate talents, undisputed veracity and piety, not excelled in their age, have vindicated with many arguments the authenticity of these letters, and which in the event have been verified. I know, Sir, it ought in a critical discussion of this kind not to be lost out of sight, that Grotius and Vitenbogaerd, though men of the highest respectability in the republic of

\* See Calvin's Comm. ad Act. xx. 28. where he calls Servetus a Spanish dog; and Comm. ad Jo. i. publ. first 1563, where he used the same opprobrious epithet.

† Sorberiana, p. 48, 1694.

‡ In voto pro pace Eccles. prop. 1

|| Hist. Eccles. Rott. 1647, in fol. tom. ii. p. 76, 7.

letters—men of untarnished reputation, were Arminians; were deeply involved in the theological disputes of that period; when from their side no stone was left unturned to retort the bitter invectives of their insolent oppressors.

Is it, then, no matter of surprise, that the Arminians of that period did not publish these letters? But it is equally strange from the other side, if these letters had been spurious, that neither Andr. Rivet, who answered Grotius, nor Ch. Drelincourt, Calvin's ablest apologist, nor Jac. Trigland, who opposed himself to Vitenbogaerd,\* should not have controverted the fact, but kept a deep silence about them. Morus's denial,† without one solid argument, and Sennebier's artful explanation of these letters, joined to later writings of Calvin, in which he expresses his mind in similar or more emphatical words, dissipate nearly every remaining doubt; and, Sir, even if it could be brought to a demonstration that these letters were spurious, it would not invalidate the truth, "that Calvin *desired* indeed and *promoted* the death of Servetus."

Permit me, Sir, to lessen the disagreeable impression of this assertion on your sensible heart, that I here show you one presumptive and strong motive, by which Calvin's zeal must have become more inflamed.

Servetus wrote a letter, published by La Roche‡ from the original document, about six years before his death, to Abel Pepin, before a monk of the family of St. Francis, then one of the ministers in the reformed church at Geneva; in which, among other less crude expressions, he says, "Your gospel, viz. that of the reformed, is without one God, without true faith, without good works. In the place of one God, you have a three-headed Cerberus; for true faith, you have a fatal dream; and the good works you call idle shadows. The belief in Christ is with you a mere varnish, operating nothing. Man is with you a senseless block, and God a chimæra of servile will." He declared further, that he foresaw his death for the cause of the gospel, and his attack upon the antichrist; and complained, "that it had not been allowed him to correct some passages in his writings, which were in possession of Calvin."

Let us reflect, Sir, how many combustible materials Servetus had brought together; let us reflect on Calvin's education, temper, and zeal, for what he believed the truth;—let us consider, that the persecution of an obstinate heretic was then deemed a meritorious work in a believer;—that even Servetus did not shrink to defend that horrible doctrine;|| and we shall not longer wonder

\* Hist. Eccles. p. 116, 117.

† Alex. Morus Orat. in Def. of Calvin, p. 72.

‡ Mem. de Literat, vol. ii. 1711, Dec. n. xc. p. 359, 360.

|| Bibl. Raison. tom. i. part ii. pp. 173—175. See his Remonstrance to the Senate of Geneva, in which he states, "that *they* (obstinate heretics) may be *exiled*." It is true, *exile* differs materially from a *capital punishment*, but it ought to be considered, that *exile* was, according to Servetus, the highest punishment, which lawfully could be inflicted by a Christian magistrate.

at the issue, as soon as Servetus published his ominous work, *Restitutio Christianismi*; neither shall you or I be inclined to throw the first stone upon Calvin or Servetus, and place ourselves in their circumstances.

I am, &c.

CANDIDUS.

## MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

### ESTIMATE OF STRICTURES ON THE IMPROVED VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.—LETTER III.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

May 12, 1810.

SIR,

The *Eclectic* reviewer of the I. V. observes, that “the unreasonable rage for innovation, in certain half-formed critics, but finished dogmatists, has established in many sober and pious minds a strong and jealous prejudice against all proposals of emendation” Nothing, certainly, is more common, than for men in avoiding one extreme to fall into another. Yet, a great authority\* might have taught the “sober and pious” persons of whom this author speaks, that a zeal for *reformation* may be quite as irrational and turbulent as zeal for *innovation*. Among every denomination of Christians, there are men whose ardour outruns their judgment, whose confidence exceeds their learning. To none of this character can the charge of being “half-formed critics, but finished dogmatists,” apply so well as those who, in the reviewer’s words, “pertinaciously contend for readings demonstrably spurious, violate the indisputable rules of moral

evidence, or make erroneous assertions as to particular facts of that evidence.”

He thinks that “our Anglo-Saxon ancestors” were in possession of two versions of the Bible; the former, by Bede; the other, wholly or in part, “by our patriot king Alfred.” But, according to Newcome,† whose accuracy can seldom be questioned, Alfred executed merely a translation of the Psalms; and “a Saxon translation of the Pentateuch, Joshua, part of the books of Kings, Esther, Judith, and the Maccabees, is also attributed to Elfric, or Elfred, who was archbishop of Canterbury in the year 995.” The reviewer’s opinion may, possibly, have proceeded from the similarity of the names of the monarch and the primate.

His animadversions on the received translation, his decision on its merits and demerits, I shall not controvert. In this, as in subsequent parts of his undertaking, I meet with proofs of his reading and reflection upon the subject before him. Sometimes, indeed,

\* Lord Bacon.

† Hist. View of Eng. Bib. Translations, p. 2.



his knowledge of it appears too elaborately displayed, as though his acquisitions were recent, and as though the persons for whom he immediately writes were in want of the information which he is capable of supplying; and frequently he provokes a smile by his quaint and learned terms. But he has, evidently, taken pains to gain and communicate a correct acquaintance with the sources of biblical criticism. To his catalogue of eminent classical scholars, in p. 28, I cannot agree that the author of 'The Doctrine of the Greek Article' should be added. I am far from being satisfied that Dr. Middleton's labours have materially contributed to elucidate the construction of the N. T. whatever services of this sort they may have called forth on the part of his opponents. Though a revision of the R. T. is not likely soon to have the sanction of public authority, yet, in the mean time, those aids towards it which have been afforded by individuals or societies, should not be despised. And I am much mistaken, if the reviewer, were he engaged in making such a revision, would not choose to have the I. V. open on his table.

With the manner in which he answers the question, 'Whether that scriptural text which is the basis of the English and of most other modern established versions, is so perfect as to forbid all endeavours to render it more exact and faithful?' I am highly satisfied. He has particularly succeeded in placing in a perspicuous and familiar light, first, the nature and operation of the causes which have injured the text of the N. T. and then, the proper methods of effecting its re-

storation or amendment. The propositions, too, which he lays down, as the result of this disquisition, are clear, judicious and important.

In his account of the text which forms the basis of the I. V. he betows upon Griesbach that tribute of warm approbation which he has long deserved from the votaries and patrons of biblical learning. A selection, moreover, is presented of the variations between this excellent scholar's edition of the N. T. and the received text. To a very large proportion of the readers of the E. R. such a catalogue, I am persuaded, must have been a new and unexpected sight. The reviewer himself supposes that they will be surprised at the number of words and clauses rejected as spurious; and, therefore, assures them, that "these rejections are made upon clear evidence." He had previously expressed his confidence, that "every competent person, and especially of those who sustain the responsible office of interpreters of the revealed will of God, will ascend to the proper sources, and investigate that evidence for himself."

A man who can utter this sentiment, so worthy of a Protestant, must, I am sure, be mortified to find, that the confidence which he thus avows, has, in one recent and memorable instance, been fallacious. He has strenuously and successfully maintained, that *xupis* is the true reading in Acts xx. 28. But Dr. Collyer, it seems, is either not willing or not *competent* to "ascend to the proper source" of knowledge, in the case, and to "investigate the evidence for himself." That gentle-

man, as I learn from a certain ordination service,\* admits *xvris* to be the language of the apostle. But on what testimony does he admit it? Why, Sir, on the suggestion of his learned friend, Dr. Smith! His confession shall be praised for its ingenuousness: it is creditable to his honesty as a man; yet, it discloses a want of intelligence and of mental activity, which much affects his character as a divine. *Prius discite qui docetis.* What am I to think of the theological and literary qualifications of one, who, sustaining "the responsible office of an interpreter of the revealed will of God," and being further distinguished by the most honourable diploma in the faculty of divinity, is under the necessity of deriving this kind of information from the suggestion of a friend? Is Dr. Collyer a stranger then to Griesbach's or any critical edition of the N. T.? Is he ignorant of the rules of biblical criticism, and of the manner in which they are applied? Or is he so situated, that, according to the words of Michaelis,† he can see only with foreign eyes, and believe on the authority of others, but has no conviction himself,—“a conviction, without which no man should presume to preach the gospel, even to a country congregation”?

The E. R. also agrees with Griesbach, and with the editors of the I. V. in their reading of 1 Tim. iii. 16. and in their rejection of the famous clause in 1 John v. 7. To the remarks of *Primitivus*,‡ and others, in favour of the translation which the editors

have given of the former passage, “He who, &c.” I can add nothing either in perspicuity or weight.

In the judgment of the critic before me, Acts xx. 28. is rescued, by the reading which the editors have adopted, from the charge of countenancing “the antisciptural sense of passible Deity.” Beyond all question, the Scriptures teach no such doctrine in any sense. And it is much more to the purpose to observe, that this passage can no longer be adduced with propriety in behalf of the supposed godhead of our Saviour. Of 1 Tim. iii. 16. it is not correct to affirm, that, although the reading be changed, the meaning remains exactly the same. Agreeably to the translation vindicated by *Primitivus*, the description is unequivocally that of a human being; and I cannot but wish that the reviewer would consult a discourse upon it from the discriminating pen of Lardner.¶

“The proofs,” says this writer, “of our Lord’s true and proper godhead, remain *unshaken*: deduced from the prophetic descriptions of the Messiah’s person in the Old Testament—from the ascription to him of the epithets, the attributes, the works, and the homage, which are peculiar to the Deity—and from those numerous and important relations which he is affirmed in Scripture to sustain toward his holy and universal church, and toward each of its true members.”

Now, the insufficiency of such reasoning, its repugnance to the soundest principles of interpreta-

\* At Hammersmith.  
† Mon. Rep. vol. iv.

‡ Introd. to N. T. (Marsh’s Transl.) vol. i. p. 181.  
¶ Works, vol. x. p. 482.



tion, has been again and again [the introductory chapters] of exposed; and, in confutation of Matthew and Luke. There are, the whole of it, stress is rightly also, certain other difficulties from laid on those passages which re- chronology, history and internal present Jesus as being *made* to us evidences, which we cannot re- what he is, and as deriving his gard as inconsiderable." Here excellencies, endowments and he writes with abundantly more prerogatives, from the One Infinite diffidence and candour than the Source of power, grace and wis- majority of the advocates of the dom. popular theology; and his diffi-

That spirit of Jesus which, on dence and candour are honoura- some occasions, restrained, and, bly presumptive of his extent of on others, prompted his apostles, information and diligence of in- was the spirit communicated at quiry. Men of ignorance, men the request and by the instrumen- averse from discussion and exami- tality of Jesus. On the rest of nation, are almost invariably "fi- the texts quoted by the critic, I nished dogmatists," and uncha- remark, in the language of Bishop ritable zealots.

Hurd,\* that "the word Christ I venture, Sir, to ask your in- is frequently used in the apostolic dulgence, and that of your rea- writings for the doctrine of Christ." ders, for one letter more, which

"It must be confessed," ob- will complete the series of com- serves the E. R. "that, upon the munications thus offered to you, testimony of Jerom and Epipha- by Yours, &c.  
N.

TO THE DISTRIBUTORS OF BIBLES AND TESTAMENTS.

Honoured Gentlemen,

Nothing is perfect in our world. our English Testament is a trans- You know, that almost all the lation of, was indirectly compiled from a very few Greek MSS, and New Testament was originally those, generally, not of the most written in the Greek language, perfect kind. This was done and the copies of it multiplied, about the year 1621. "Since for about fifteen centuries, by the that time, upwards of three hun- pen, and not by the press. As dred MSS. of the whole, or differ- this was the case, many errors ent parts of the New Testament, would unavoidably get into the have been collated by learned text. And this we know to be men with much care, industry and skill." Of these MSS. some the fact, as there are many dif- are of far greater antiquity and ferent readings in the best MS authority than any of those upon copies now extant. which the received text is founded,

It is well known to the learned, of two only excepted. From these MSS. a vast num- of different denominations of ber of various readings have been Christians, that the printed copy of the Greek Testament, which

\* Lectures on Proph. vol. ii. p. 11. (4th ed.)



extracted; by the assistance of which, the Greek Testament, published by the learned, judicious and impartial Dr. Griesbach, is much improved. And these studies have been carried to such an extent, that it is believed that nothing more material can be done, to bring the text nearer the original standard.

Now, it appears from this invaluable copy of the Greek Testament, that the following passages (not now to mention many others) should read as follows: Acts xx. 28. The church of the Lord, &c. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Who was manifested in the flesh, &c. that 1 John v. 7. is spurious; and, therefore, should be dropt; Jude v. 25. To the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, (be) glory and majesty, dominion and power, (as) before all time, so now, and throughout all ages. Amen. And Rev. i. 11. should be read without, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."

I therefore beg leave to submit it to your very serious consideration, whether you will not be highly to blame, if, knowing these things, you continue to disperse the present erroneous English copies of the New Testament without correcting them. The Almighty God says, Ye shall not

add unto the word which I command you, &c. Deut. iv. 2. And our blessed Lord says, If any one shall add to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book, &c. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.—Therefore, these erroneous translations should be corrected, or perfect ones added at the end of the book.

It is too late to hide these things from the common people; and it would be both dishonourable and criminal to attempt it. Truth can do no person any harm. And the work is not ours, but God's. All that we have to do, is, to give the world as perfect a copy of the New Testament as we possibly can. If you, Sirs, shift it off, depend upon it, God will raise up reformers from some other quarters, on whom he will confer that honour which you may now secure to yourselves.

If you should doubt of the accuracy of these observations, please to read the second edition of Griesbach's Greek Testament; Michaelis's *Introd. to the N. T.* by Marsh, vol. ii. p. 834, 878—887; Butler's *Horæ Biblicæ*, vol. i. p. 162. 4th edit.; or the *Eclectic Review* for March 1809.

I am,

Yours,

J.

#### ON PREACHING UNITARIANISM.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

Lambrook, near South Petherton,  
Dec. 19, 1809.

SIR,

The following queries being considered of great and lasting importance, are sent for insertion in your liberal and useful Repository.

Some of them, it is hoped, will draw the attention of your zealous and enlightened correspondents. And, should they be the means of calling forth to the field a more able querist or defender of an open declaration of truth, than your

present correspondent, his hopes will be fully and satisfactorily answered. With sentiments of gratitude to those of your correspondents that are no "bush-fighters;"—with a sincere wish, that all the defenders of truth may openly avow it, not only in the pulpit, but in giving their own signatures to their communications;—and with an ardent desire, that the Repository may increase in circulation, as well as usefulness,

I am,  
Yours, &c.

THOMAS DAVIS.

1. If Unitarianism (i. e. the doctrine of the proper unity and unrivalled supremacy of God, and of the proper or simple humanity of Christ) is the doctrine of the gospel, is it not therefore to be plainly taught and inculcated from the pulpit?

2. Should the above be answered in the affirmative, it is further asked, How long can an Unitarian minister remain with a congregation, without making his sentiments known to the same, consistent with a principle of common honesty, not to speak of Christian integrity?

3. It may be answered to the last query, that the prejudices, &c. of the audience are to be considered; and every one is to determine for himself, and to act as his situation or circumstances require; and that every discretionary person will divulge the truth gradually, as he sees the people able to bear it, &c. &c. &c.—Upon this is grounded my third query. If one degree of prejudice is a satisfactory reason that a minister should conceal his sentiments for, for instance, one year,

will not six such degrees of prejudice be as good and satisfactory a reason for another to conceal them for six years? And, if any one could prove that his audience possessed such prejudices, that would as well justify him in concealing his opinions *through life*, as the prejudices of another audience justified its minister for concealing *his* for one or six years, what reply could be made? Or, could he be called timid or insincere, more than a person who conceals his sentiments for only one year, because of the above reasons?

4. What is meant by the phrase, "speaking the truth by degrees?"

5. Is not the practice of giving a sermon upon particular disputed points, for instance, once in six or twelve months, a justification of this conclusion, that such persons do not wish to *convince* their audience, or to prove that they are not afraid of declaring their sentiments?

6. Do not those ministers, who seldom or never preach their peculiar tenets, most plainly acknowledge that they are not of much importance, and that they belong more particularly to useless speculation than beneficial practice?

7. It is generally, at least by many, believed, that those who exercise great caution in preaching the truth; to speak more plainly, that those who conceal the greatest part of their belief, are more successful than the open, unreserved avowers of Unitarianism. Now, does not matter of fact loudly declare in this manner, that those who conceal their sentiments, after preaching for probably half a century to the same

people, have been turned out of their pulpits to give room to bold enthusiastic champions of reputed orthodoxy, whilst the zealous, but temperate defender of simple truth has kept his place, and brought many to the knowledge of pure Christianity?

8. Is not the comparatively little success of Unitarianism in a very great degree to be attributed to the indifference, the worldly policy, or timidity, or false idea of candour, that exists in its public teachers?

9. Has it not been considered as a desirable thing, that the poor should come to the knowledge of Unitarianism? If so, ought not a full, simple, intelligible statement and defence of it, to be frequently made from the pulpit? For, in what other way can he that is poor become acquainted with it?

10. But it has frequently been said, in answer to the above query, that *frequently* to inculcate Unitarian principles, would be

disgusting to the more enlightened part of the audience, for they know or have read of these points and gained full satisfaction; and that they come to meeting to be reminded of their duty, and to be better established in principles of piety and devotion. Not to say, that there is hardly one of a hundred but that wants to be reminded of Unitarian principles, or to have further explanation of the Scripture; it is replied or asked, Suppose that another should say, that he wants to be taught the truth more than any thing else, would this be a reason for the minister of that place to preach doctrine only? And if the totally practical hearers are to be gratified, is not this pleasing men? But, why should we talk of practical and doctrinal preaching? Is not doctrine connected with practice? And may it not be said very often, that though it belonged to doctrine, the sermon was practical?

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DEMOCRITUS' DOUBTS ON THE SUBJECT OF PHILOSOPHICAL FREE WILL.

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*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

London, Dec. 13, 1809.

SIR,

I need scarcely inform you that I am no metaphysician, for that you will soon perceive; but expecting there may be one amongst your correspondents, induces me to request, if such there be, that he or you will have the goodness to satisfy a few doubts which I labour under, on the subject of *philosophical free-will*.

You may, if you please, Sir, consider me in practice a Necessarian or a Libertarian, to me it

is "perfectly immaterial" which; of myself, at present, I can only say, *homo sum*.

Casting my eyes a few days ago over some books which had been thrown aside as lumber by an ignorant domestic, I met with Dr. Beattie's celebrated "Essay on Truth." Dr. Beattie, you know, Sir, was the opponent and refuter of Hume; I had, therefore, the curiosity to read his ideas on the subject "of liberty and necessity," (p. 2. c. 2. § 3.) I understand, Sir, there are different



opinions on the style of this section of the doctor's essay: some considering it a remarkably elegant and chaste composition, abounding in epigrammatic point, and conclusive in reasoning; others (sceptics, I suppose) thinking it flippant, acrimonious, full of absurd and vulgar antitheses, of distorted argument and false reasoning—

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree,  
And soundest casuists doubt?"

But, whatever may be the opinions on this subject, the fact is, that Dr. Beattie acquired great, and no doubt deserved fame, for thus nobly and disinterestedly stepping forward in defence of "common sense" against "perplexing sophistry," and meritoriously refuting the *atheistical Hume*; whom, from the head of the church to the tail—from the king upon his throne, and their graces, the most reverend fathers in God, the archbishops, upon theirs, to the beadle and the grave-digger, it was the fashion of the day to *abuse* or *refute*; which words, I understand, are with some (otherwise very pious) theologians synonymous.

I have, Sir, already assured you, that I am no metaphysician; and I think you will not accuse me of having been in any danger of becoming one from reading Dr. Beattie's Essay.—I do not believe it has had *that* effect.

Other writers, I am informed, such as *Dr. Reid* and *Dr. Gregory*, have discussed the subjects of liberty and necessity, but I did not think it would be proper to treat *Dr. Beattie* with the disrespect of not trusting entirely to him; for he has taken great pains to show,

what a person like myself, not skilled in metaphysics, might otherwise, perhaps, have doubted, "that we cannot do some things, but have it in our power to do others: that I can, e. g. take up my staff from the ground, but cannot lift a stone of a thousand weight; that I cannot ascend to the clouds, nor sink downwards to the centre of the earth; that when a man asks me a question, I have it in my power to answer or be silent;" and other like grave and metaphysical truths. He has also *proved* or *affirmed*, (which, I suppose, in the language of this science to mean the same,) that the doctrine of philosophical necessity is neither more nor less than "Fate;" and that a philosophical necessarian is of course a "Fatalist," by which he must mean one who believes in "a blind fate and a fatherless, deserted world."

Now, all this was new to me, for I had heard it said, that a necessarian does believe in a God; and I had also understood that his creed is the same with that of the Roman poet, "*Deus est ubique movemur*;" but in this, perhaps, my informant was mistaken, from not being sufficiently well acquainted with the doctrine he undertook to explain. And I am the more induced to think so, from a passage in a very sensible letter in your Repository, for October, signed E. N. (who appears himself to be a metaphysician,) wherein I find there are "violent assertors of necessity." Previous to reading this, I did not think there were, or, indeed, could be such persons; because my friend had also informed me, that necessarians believed the human

mind to be absolutely and irresistibly influenced and determined by *motives*: whereas, if this were the fact, *violence* could never consistently be resorted to by them, as they must know (if any persons do) that argument has so much greater effect on rational beings; and, therefore, practically, there could be no such thing as a *violent necessarian*; but in this, I suppose, my informant was also mistaken.

Your correspondent E. N. having read *Hume* on the subject of necessity, does not appear to be *convinced*, but has, like myself, still some very formidable difficulties on his mind; and no wonder he has, after perusing this doubting philosopher. I would have referred him to *Dr. Beattie* for relief, and if that had failed, I am informed, it is probable, *Dr. Hartley*, *Dr. Priestley*, or *Dr. Crombie*, might have afforded it to him; but he has applied to you, Sir, and I hope through your means he will obtain satisfaction.

A similar motive, Sir, that of being relieved from my difficulties, has led me also to apply to you; for though I have read *Dr. Beattie* with all the attention he deserves, I must confess I am not so far convinced by his *arguments* of the truth of the doctrine of *philosophical liberty*, as to have no doubts remaining; nor, indeed, am I without my fears for the *consequences* of that doctrine. But this may be from my ignorance: I therefore speak under correction.

My doubts and my fears I shall briefly state, hoping, as I before mentioned, that you, or some one of your metaphysical friends,

will be able to set my mind at rest.

I am informed, Sir, that a *philosophical libertarian* possesses within him a self-existing, self-determining will; which enables him to do whatever he pleases, either with a motive or without a motive; when motives are equal, or contrary to all motives, be they ever so strong. This will, I understand, is subject to no control, neither divine nor human; and is, therefore, regulated by no laws either of God or man, but exists perfectly free and independent of every being and of every thing.

Though I received this information from good authority, yet I must own I have my doubts, whether any person be in possession of such a faculty or power, because, if he were, I imagine his attention would be directed by nothing but *chance*, and his character would be formed by nothing but *caprice*; for, as he could at his pleasure refuse to be acted upon by motives, though ever so strong or so properly applied, so nothing could with even the very lowest degree of probability be predicated of his actions in any given situation;—thus I doubt whether such a capricious and anomalous being would be a proper subject either of divine or of human government; and so far from his being suited to the society of *rational* beings, I much question whether even Mr. Warburton or Mr. L'Homme would not refuse to take him under his care.

If, however, it can be satisfactorily shewn, that there are persons of this description, it may be as well for me to inquire *now*, rather than trouble you again on

the subject, at what age they attain this privilege; for though I have arrived at "man's estate," I am not yet *conscious* that I am in possession of this undefinable power; and I am told that the persons who do possess it *are* conscious of having it, and that it is indeed the strongest and, perhaps, only proof of its existence.

I have little more to add. My fear, Sir, (groundless, I hope,) is,

that the belief in such a doctrine as that of philosophical liberty, may lead, not indirectly, but directly and immediately, to absolute and undisguised atheism.

On these points, Sir, I hope to receive satisfactory information, through the medium of your impartial Repository;

And am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

DEMOCRITUS.

THE QUESTION OF A LITURGY DISCUSSED.—LETTER III.

To the Editor of the *Monthly Repository*.

Norwich, May 25, 1810.

SIR,

Having examined the authority on which the use of a liturgy rests, and endeavoured to ascertain how far the introduction of one among dissenting congregations has succeeded, it now becomes necessary to inquire into the advantages or disadvantages likely to result from the disuse of free prayer, and the adoption either of a printed form or written prayers.

We are told that a liturgy will ensure correct and proper language, and prevent the vulgar, coarse, and frequently disgusting addresses to the Deity, which are to be heard among those who use free prayer. In the 1st place, it should be remembered, that prayer is the feeling of the heart, and not merely the expression of the lips; and that a preacher would do well to reflect, that an address to the Father of mercies, however plain and simple, however unadorned or unstudied, if flowing immediately from the heart, and dictated by a spirit of real piety, will be heard with at least equal interest by the sincere and

devout Christian, and will come up before the throne of heaven with equal acceptance, as an address which is polished with the utmost care and assiduity, and finished by the nicest rules of human eloquence. Some persons, I am well aware, attend public worship for the avowed purpose of being amused. Florid declamation, an imposing and theatrical manner, or a well-written moral essay, are to them abundantly sufficient, without any recommendation of Christian principles or Christian duties. To such it is not at present my intention to address myself. But,

2dly, I should completely deny that the greatest propriety of sentiment and expression are incompatible with free prayer. Have there not been instances innumerable of the most perfect propriety of expression and the most correct choice of language, being used by such as have never written a prayer? I appeal to those who have sat under such ministers as have been trained up in the use of free prayer, whether they have been often disgusted by unbecoming, vulgar, or trifling language?



Because a cobbler chooses to leave his stall, or a tailor to descend from his shopboard, and having dubbed himself a divine, pours forth an incoherent rhapsody of vulgarity and nonsense, is the practice of free prayer to be condemned and abandoned? Surely, because such men disgrace and dishonour a solemn and interesting duty, it is not on that account the less excellent in itself. If those who intend to take upon themselves the important duties of a dissenting minister, have either a natural incapacity for them, or are too indolent to apply themselves to their attainment, let them engage in some other employment. But instead of suiting themselves to the ministry, they must suit the ministry to them. They are not content with following the practice of our Saviour and his apostles, but they must set to work to improve and amend it. What has a liturgy done for the established church? has it made zealous ministers and attentive hearers? This, I believe, will not be contended. On the contrary, has it not rendered many of the former indolent, careless, and unconcerned about a preparation for their important office? and does it not spread listlessness and inattention over the latter? Let the dissenters take warning by this example: let them beware how they discourage free prayer, and introduce written forms and liturgies. Let them beware, lest an adoption of the practice of the church do not lead to the same fatal effects, and introduce the same levity and unconcern, the same folly and dissipation among dissenting ministers, as at present too strongly characterise the clergy of the establishment. And here I cannot but lament the system which is pursued with regard to the divinity students at the York Academy. If I am rightly informed, the practice of free prayer is not only neglected, but forbidden, and no prayer except a written one is suffered to be used by any of the students. Now, with all possible respect for the eminent talents and unwearied industry of the worthy and learned tutor who is at the head of that academy, I cannot help feeling both surprise and regret at his prohibiting and preventing a mode of prayer, which he knows has prevailed most successfully amongst almost all dissenting congregations till of late years, and to which very many sincere and pious Christians are most ardently attached. Surely, in an academy whose just pride it is, that "its only text-book is the Bible,"\* the liberty to choose between free and written prayer ought to be permitted, and that mode which our Saviour and his apostles used, at least, tolerated.

Another advantage of a liturgy we are told is, that people would know what their ministers are going to say; whereas now, they are in entire ignorance of the expressions he will choose to adopt. This, in my humble opinion, is no disadvantage, but the contrary. Where people hear the same words over and over again, Sunday after Sunday, without the possibility of change or variation, they will, we know from experience, hear without attention. Free prayer,

\* Turner's Sermon preached before the academy.

on the contrary, will keep alive the attention both of ministers and people. In the one it will beget a spirit of devotion, a serious frame and temper of mind; and in the other, indifference and coldness will be excluded, and the faculties of the soul fixed to their noblest employment, the social worship of God. Besides, free prayer gives room for the adaptation of our devotional addresses to peculiar circumstances, to peculiar seasons of rejoicing and thankfulness, or of humiliation and affliction, either national or individual, which advantage would be entirely removed by the use of a liturgy.

But admitting, for a moment, that some advantage might result from the use of a liturgy, I should be glad to be informed who are to draw it up, who are to make this bed of Procrustes, by which the consciences of all Unitarian congregations are to be measured? Are we to have a conclave of our divines, at whose pleasure this liturgy is to be fabricated, altered, and amended from time to time? Either this must be the case, which I do not apprehend we should be exactly disposed to relish, or the idea of Primitivus must be abandoned, as altogether visionary and impracticable.

Having trespassed so long on your patience and that of your readers, I shall now finish with a quotation from a small tract on this subject, written by Dr. John Taylor, formerly minister in this city.

“The case, my dear country-

men, in every view, is very plain. You read in your assemblies the pure word of God: your ministers, to the best of their abilities, instruct and pray according to that rule. And according to that rule, you sincerely endeavour to form your religious sentiments, leaving your fellow Christians perfectly free to do the same, and living with them in peace, and in all offices of love and goodness, though they may happen in some things to differ from you in judgment. Thus you improve in knowledge and piety, faith and charity; and what would you have more? You pray as from the beginning of the world the patriarchs prayed; you pray as our blessed Lord prayed; you pray as the holy servants of God, the prophets and apostles, prayed. I may add, you pray as angels would pray, should they come down and officiate in your assemblies.

“If once you desert your Scripture principles, and give into the inventions of busy heads, you may be left to wander and lose yourselves in the devious paths of the vainest imaginations. Some things have already been moved, and others will follow, as ignorance, vanity, assurance, a lust of power, love of novelty, an aversion to study and labour, a disregard to Scripture principles, a contempt of gospel simplicity, and other evil effects and consequences.”

I am, Sir,

Your constant reader,

AN UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

## INQUIRY CONCERNING NICHOLAS AND THOMAS WARREN.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

SIR,

One advantage, among others, of your Repository, has been found to be that of procuring information respecting persons, concerning whom your correspondents have had occasion to make inquiry, but have made it among their acquaintance in vain. The object of my present address is to gain intelligence concerning a Mr. Warren, of Cranbrook, whose name appears in an advertisement prefixed to a volume of sermons, lately sent to me, without any information to whom I am indebted for them.

The title of the volume is as follows: "Sermons by the Rev. Thomas Warren, many years rector of St. Elizabeth, in Jamaica, and Chaplain to the Honorable the House of Assembly there. London, printed by Galabin and Marchant, 1809." But no publisher's name is inserted, nor is any editor mentioned, neither is there any account given of the reason of printing these discourses, (which are sixteen in number, and elegantly printed,) but all that is said of them is contained in the advertisement, of which this is an exact copy. "The following discourses are little more than amplifications of some manuscript sermons of my respected father on the same subjects. They were delivered by me to small congregations in Jamaica, principally

for the purpose of enforcing that most important point of Christian doctrine, that religion and morality, pure religion and good works, are inseparable. If any of the arguments or exhortations convince the understanding or warm the heart, strengthen the faith or animate the virtue of the reader, the labours of the composer and the editor will be better rewarded than by any other praise.

THOMAS WARREN,

Son of the Rev. Nicholas Warren, many years a preacher of the gospel, at Cranbrook, in Kent."

It is presumed, that this Mr. N. Warren was a dissenting minister; and I have a faint recollection of having heard that he was some way related to Dr. Lardner, which apprehension is somewhat confirmed by the situation of the place where he preached; Cranbrook being near Hawkhurst, which, according to Dr. Kippis, was the place of Dr. Lardner's nativity and of his interment.\*

Possibly, Sir, some one of your inquisitive correspondents may be able to furnish your readers with some account of this Mr. Nicholas Warren; as also of his son, who has shown this partiality to his father's compositions; and of the occasion, time and circumstances of his conformity to the church of England. This would particularly gratify

Your Occasional Correspondent.

\* In turning to Kippis's Memoirs of Lardner, I cast my eye on the following passage, p. 96. "My friend, Dr. Towers, has favoured me with the perusal of a series of letters written to Dr. Flemming, by Dr. Lardner, in which he freely disclosed his thoughts concerning men and things." Query—What is become of these letters? If in being, would not a selection from them afford a high entertainment to the public?



## ZEAL IN THE CAUSE OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH:

A Discourse delivered at the opening of the Winter Evening Lectures, of the First Unitarian Society in Philadelphia, 5th of Nov. 1809, by R. EDDOWES.

Gal. iv. 18. *It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.*

Another season, my Christian friends, has revolved, and leaves us in our little society, as at the outset, like sheep without a shepherd, obliged to go in and out, and find pasture *by* ourselves and *for* ourselves. In such a situation it might have been thought very improbable, that we should have continued to exist at the present period; nor do we pretend to say that it is altogether such as we should choose if an alternative were within our reach. We fully appreciate the advantages arising from the faithful services of an able and zealous pastor; we hold such a character in high estimation; and are deeply sensible how very defective in imparting a suitable tone and dignity to the public devotions of a Christian church, must be the endeavours of persons whose attention is necessarily directed, in a considerable degree, to concerns of a different nature.

Nevertheless, from the proof to which these attempts have now for such a length of time been subjected, we perceive and we rejoice in the establishment of some points of considerable importance (as we believe) to the cause of rational religion and Christian liberty. One of them is this: when we speak of the great respect we should entertain for the person, who might sustain the pastoral relation to our society, we wish it to be understood that it would not be for any thing supposed to be inherent in his *official* character,

but according to the strict letter of the scriptural injunction, "for his work's sake." We can, together with every friend to sound sense and foe to superstition, smile at the pretensions to superior sanctity derived from, and the imaginary importance attached to, apostolic succession, the ceremonial of ordination, peculiarity of habit, and dignity of title. We cannot be of opinion that the unction of the Holy Ghost is consequent upon any of these; or that sacred things are prophaned when taken into other hands. The simple question is—"Whether the office of a Christian teacher was instituted for the benefit of the people, or whether the people are to be considered as an appendage to the office, and to be collected into a flock for the emolument and dignity of those who should occupy it?" The answer cannot be difficult, when we recollect that even "the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The highest sounding ecclesiastical titles, without the people, are mere non-entities—nothing but empty names. Whereas, the people, with the Scriptures in their hands, may form a regularly-constituted church: they may adopt that mode of worship which to them appears to be most conformable to the gospel rule: they may employ whomsoever they think best qualified to conduct their religious services; and it would be nothing less than spiritual tyranny to impose such a

character upon them without consulting them at all, as is in some countries the practice; nor, although not in an equal degree censurable, can the confinement of their choice to a particular class of men be deemed any other than an infringement of their just and undoubted rights. This maxim, equally sound as applied either to civil or ecclesiastical government, we conceive to be fully exemplified by the existence of our society in its present form, and think it must be viewed with complacency by every real friend of rational freedom.

We find another source of satisfaction in observing, that the Unitarian principle is of sufficient strength to keep a number of worshippers together, without those adventitious aids which have commonly the greatest influence in the formation of religious societies. This, however, though a subject of congratulation, is by no means of wonder. You, my Unitarian brethren, have probably found yourselves (as I am sure I have done) in a most distressing dilemma. Your early habits have taught you the love of social worship: your convictions and experience have shown you its great importance to individual and public virtue. And while no other than Trinitarian worship was to be found all around you, your only alternative has been to neglect the duty altogether, or to run the hazard of having your feelings harassed and your attention drawn aside, by addresses to other beings than the only supreme and legitimate object of devout homage, and with allusions to doctrines which you could not but believe were highly derogatory from his all-perfect character. But hav-

ing experienced the relief, the satisfaction, the comfort, of joining in religious services exclusively directed to the One Great Eternal Spirit, of waiting upon God without distraction, and obeying what you are convinced is his first and great commandment, you have been content to excuse the want of oratorical declamation, and to accept of the unostentatious productions of prepared composition, instead of the more brilliant effusions of unpremeditated genius.

Our numbers, it is true, are small; and we are far from affecting a fastidious indifference as to their increase. But we deprecate additions to them by any other means than through conviction of the truth of our principles, after full and impartial examination; and we have every reason to wait with patience and calmness the result of such a mode of making converts. In fact, so strongly and directly do the natural operations of reason tend to confirm that grand principle of revealed religion, the Unity of God, that the very absurdity of a plurality of divine beings, or that trinity and equality can be consistent with unity, is gradually working its own extinction. There was a time when the belief of it and of its sister-error, transubstantiation, might be said to be universal. It survived as well that, as many other papal corruptions, at the æra of the reformation, and was retained in all its extravagance in Protestant creeds and confessions. But, the fetters of spiritual despotism once relaxed, Reason soon began to reclaim her violated rights, and many individuals were found who nobly asserted the divine unity in



its true, scriptural and rational meaning. These, however, presently became subject to obliquity and persecution from the very people who were glorying in their emancipation from the thralldom of the Roman church, and justifying it on the ground of natural and imprescriptable right. Yea, not more than ten years subsequent to the memorable British Revolution, when it might have been supposed that the grounds both of civil and religious liberty had been thoroughly explored and well understood, it was enacted by statute, "That if any person professing the Christian religion, or educated in the same, shall, by writing, printing, teaching, or advised speaking, deny any one of the persons in the Holy Trinity to be God, or maintain that there are more Gods than one," (that is, who shall deny that three and one are the same thing,) he shall, upon the first offence, be rendered incapable to hold any office or place of trust; and for the second, be rendered incapable of bringing any action, being guardian, executor, legatee, or purchaser of lands, and shall suffer three years' imprisonment without bail." If Protestants in general were chargeable with invading those rights in others which they had so justly and successfully asserted for themselves, in opposition to the usurpations of Rome, *Protestant Dissenters*, who had gone yet greater lengths in vindicating the claims of private judgment, did not escape the imputation of a like inconsistency. Excluded from the emoluments of the establishment, on account of their nonconformity with the articles of the national church, they pursued with the inveterate malevolence of bigotry many of their brethren who, in like manner, departed from the Westminster confession of faith, and endeavoured by every possible means to ruin their reputation and obstruct their usefulness. An association of divines was formed in the West of England, which, for several years, assumed inquisitorial powers; and, as far as in them lay, prevented the ordination and settlement of ministers, who would not subscribe to the first of the articles of the establishment, or to the answers of the 5th and 6th questions of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, which assert the divine unity in a trinity of persons. But this state of things did not continue long. Both churchmen and dissenters were aware of what all ecclesiastical history testifies, that persecution only assists to spread the tenets it is intended to suppress; and the most rigid zealots became ashamed of opposing, by these unworthy methods, opinions entertained and advocated by such eminent characters as Sir Isaac Newton, John Locke and Nathaniel Lardner.

From the period that this mode of attack has been laid aside, and penal statutes have become a dead letter, the progress of Unitarianism has indeed been slow, but certain and permanent. Even the pious and excellent Watts, in the latter part of his time, had "abated much of his younger assurance" upon orthodox points; and whoever will peruse the writings of the most eminent dissenting ministers who succeeded him will find a gradual departure from these tenets, and a strong leaning towards, if not an open avowal



of, the Arian doctrine. Since the time of the illustrious Priestley, whose name this society has the honour of having enrolled among its records, and this country that of containing his remains in its bosom, matters have assumed a more decided aspect. He has fully demonstrated that the doctrine of One God and one mediator was the doctrine originally taught by Christ and his apostles, and that whatever contradicts it, is an innovation and corruption. Its advocates, emboldened by his example, have spoken and written freely and argued unanswerably, and the consequence has been a most rapid accession to the number of professors of the unadulterated religion of the New Testament.

For an illustration of what I have now advanced, I doubt not I may repeat my appeal to what has passed in the minds of several of you, my friends, who, like myself, are entering upon the latter periods of life. Although I am certain we can never remember the time when we thought we *understood* the doctrine of three Gods in one, and one God in three, yet a kind of pious reverence, and perhaps a regard to the judgment of persons, whom we held in dutiful respect or cordial esteem, led us to yield an assent to it, and to believe, that, though it could not be comprehended, it ought not to be questioned.

As the years of mature reflection drew on, pious awe gave place to doubt, and doubt increased into an actual disbelief of a thing so totally repugnant to every dictate of reason and common sense. Not yet prepared, however, to add the belief of the

proper humanity of Christ to that of the strict and incontrovertible unity and supremacy of the Father, we concluded that he must have had an existence of a superior kind prior to his appearance in this world, and that his sufferings and death were necessary to propitiate the Deity towards our sinful race, and his perfect obedience to make up for the defects of ours. But we have since been convinced that to consider the Lord Jesus Christ as simply a partaker of our own flesh and blood, not only frees the sacred history from many otherwise insuperable difficulties, but is most conformable to the plan of our redemption by him, and affords us a large addition of encouragement and consolation; that the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures is the extension of the free and unpurchased mercy of God to sinners upon sincere repentance and reformation; and that it is as inconsistent with the eternal principles of justice, to bestow rewards on account of the righteousness, as to inflict punishments on account of the transgressions, of another.

Such, it may be taken for granted, will be the general result of the inquiries of the human understanding into these interesting and important subjects; and we might be well astonished if, where it is left perfectly free and unshackled, as, blessed be God, is the case in this happy land of liberty, its efforts should not conduct it to the discovery of truth, and produce a firm adherence to her dictates.

Symptoms of this already appear. Already has the American press given publicity to able ar-

guments in support of the Unitarian doctrine, and in the metropolis of the eastern section of the Union (and not there only) flourishing Unitarian churches are found. *Here*, indeed, we are but as the little flock, the buried grain of mustard seed, the hidden lump of leaven. But this excites no dissatisfaction—occasions no discouragement. To the momentous import of the cause itself, rather than to the glare and attraction of any thing external, it ought to owe its success; and that it will, in God's own time and way, ultimately succeed, we entertain not the least doubt. But he works by human instrumentality; and often, by means the least probable, produces the most important effects. It is, therefore, our duty to exert the abilities, whatever they may be, with which he hath endued us, in forwarding his designs for increasing the knowledge and promoting the virtue and happiness of mankind. It is with this view that we appropriate the greater part of such of our funds as are not immediately called for in necessary expenses, to the publication of pieces and tracts, on subjects relative to or connected with the Unitarian doctrine, a volume of which we hope to complete in the course of the ensuing year. It is purely from this motive that, notwithstanding many important and pressing engagements of a secular nature, we, who conduct the public services of this place, devote a considerable portion of our time to the selection and preparation of materials proper for so serious a business. And still more particularly upon this principle it is, that the delivery of these Lectures is un-

dertaken, in which, without availing ourselves as on other occasions of the assistance of printed discourses, we venture to offer our own thoughts in our own language. In so doing, we use the liberty which we conceive every individual of this society enjoys, of exercising his own judgment upon any subject whatever, and of expressing it conformably to our rules; and thus it may happen that on every minute point we who address you on these occasions may not exactly coincide, although on main and essential articles, we trust that no discordance will be found. On others, difference of opinion never should create disunion in any Christian society, composed of persons of liberal and enlightened minds;—but this leads me to the mention of a circumstance rather of an unpleasant kind. Although our doors and our communion table are open to all the world, yet, instructed both by general and particular experience, we have, in forming our constitution, restricted the title of member, and the right of taking a part in the proceedings of the society, to such as shall express by their written signature their assent to its fundamental doctrines and its established regulations. Of these, five are to be a committee for transacting several items of business placed within their department, among which is the appointment of those who are to perform the duties of the Lord's day during the vacancy of the pastoral office. Respectably as we are in general attended, yet so small at present is the number of our acting members, that it has almost unavoidably happened, that the conductors of the



public services have formed a majority of the committee, and have, therefore, (no one else appearing inclined to undertake the work,) virtually *appointed themselves* to this important trust. This is so contrary to every constitutional principle that ought to prevail in a free country, or a free society, that we anxiously wish to see it remedied, by the admission of such well-known, steady, and consistent friends to the cause, as might raise our character, promote our usefulness, and bring the institution to its true spirit and bearing.

[To be concluded in the next Number.]

MR. MARSON'S ANSWER TO INQUIRIES ON THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST.

To the Editor of the *Monthly Repository*.

March 13, 1810.

Sir,

Your correspondent Παύλος-προς, in your *Repository* for Feb. last, p. 69. requests an answer to certain queries which he proposes, respecting the pre-existence of Jesus Christ. As he professes himself "to be anxious to come to a fixed and settled opinion respecting that point," it would give me peculiar pleasure should I be so happy as to afford him any satisfaction on the subject.

It may be necessary, first, however, to observe, that, whether the queries he proposes can be satisfactorily answered, or not, the truth of the pre-existence, if the fact is supported by sufficient evidence, will not be affected by any difficulties that may be suggested as to the nature or modus of it. It is a fact which your correspondent, I presume, will not question, if he be a believer in revelation, that Jesus Christ is ascended into heaven; but were your correspondent asked, what he now is, or where he is? he would probably find it very difficult to give a satisfactory answer to those queries; because, whilst the Scrip-

tures assure us, that *we shall be like him*, that we shall be conformed to his image, and have our vile bodies fashioned like to his *glorious body*, they, at the same time, say, that "It doth not yet appear what *we* shall be." Consequently, it does not yet appear what *he* is; it may, therefore, be equally impossible to give a satisfactory explanation of the mode of his existence, and of his nature before he came into the world, supposing the doctrine of his pre-existence to be incontrovertibly established.

The queries of your correspondent are precisely of the same nature with those, which, in the days of the apostles, were made use of to invalidate the doctrine of the resurrection,\* by some who said, "There is no resurrection of the dead." By which they subverted the very foundation on which Christianity rests, the resurrection of Jesus Christ; for so the apostle reasons. To which they reply by asking, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?"

As it would have been premature in me to have entered on an

\* 1 Cor. xv. 35.



explanation of the nature of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, or of what he was in his pre-existent state, before I had adduced evidence in support of the fact, I confined myself in my observations on Mr. Belsham entirely to the proof of that point, in which, if I have succeeded, the truth of that fact cannot be overthrown or weakened by any such queries as those of your correspondent.

Presuming, then, the truth of the fact of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, (which must necessarily be presumed in order to the following observations,) I shall proceed to give my thoughts on the subject, in reply to your correspondent.

First, your correspondent asks, "What rank amidst the creatures of God do those who believe the pre-existence imagine that Jesus Christ held before he appeared on earth?" The New Testament uniformly represents Jesus Christ as a man; Peter expressly calls him, "A man approved of God by miracles and signs which God did by him." Nor have the Scriptures, I believe, ever intimated that he is or ever was any other than a man. That he pre-existed as a *super-angelic* being, or as a pure human *soul* or *spirit* nowhere appears; such terms, as applied to him, are certainly not to be found in the Scriptures, which is a sufficient reason for rejecting them. To his being a *man* in that state, it was not necessary that he should be produced by, or that he should descend from some other man; for this was not the case of the first man. As the first man then was our pro-

totype, to whose image we were to be conformed in the present state, is it not natural to suppose, admitting the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, that he was designed to be the prototype to whom we should be conformed in the future state, and that it was necessary in order to raise us to that state, that he should be made like unto us in all things? The apostle comparing Adam and Christ, says of the origin of the first man, that "he was of the earth, earthy; but of the second man, that he was from heaven, heavenly;" for he adds, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." That man is capable of existence in different states, and under very different circumstances, we must believe, if we believe in the resurrection and a state of future existence; why, then, may we not suppose, that the person of Christ in his pre-existent state was precisely what it is now, and that the change which took place in him in his humiliation was in all respects the reverse of that which took place in him at his resurrection, and of that which will take place in us at our resurrection? And do not the words of the apostle (Rom. i. 4.) strongly corroborate this idea?

Secondly, your correspondent asks, "Do the pre-existarians believe that he came on earth in the same nature as he possessed before, or that he underwent a change, and became at his con-

\* See 2 Cor. viii. 9.

ception no higher or better than a man?" To which I reply, the Scripture has nowhere said that Jesus Christ assumed *human nature*, or that he took *any nature* upon him; but it does expressly call his state of humiliation, "*The days of his flesh*," (Heb. v. 7.) and says that "he was *made* of the seed of David *according to the flesh*," that "the word was *made flesh*;" and that "as the children were partakers of *flesh* and blood, he also *took part* of the same." Now the apostle affirms, that "*Flesh* and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" yet Jesus Christ is ascended into heaven, and of him it is said, that "The son of man came down from heaven," and Jesus speaking of himself under the metaphor of bread, says, (John vi. 51.) "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is my *flesh*;" not that he was the *son of man* before he was *made* of the seed of David; or *flesh* before he came down from heaven; but that *he*, who was *then* the son of man, who was *then* flesh, came down from heaven. In like manner we may say, with the strictest truth and propriety, that the *loaf*, the *bread*, which we eat, came out of the *field*, although it was neither a *loaf* nor bread whilst it was *there*; but to the truth of such an assertion, it is necessary that the substance should be the same, whatever changes it may have passed through. Hence, it will follow, that the change which

took place in the person of Jesus Christ when he came into the world, was not the assumption of a human *person* into union with a divine person, or of a human *body* into union with a pure spirit, but such a change as is consistent with his proper personal identity and humanity, in every stage of his existence. If Jesus Christ assumed a nature which was not essential to his *person*, and if that nature only was capable of sufferings and death, then it would not be true that *he* either died for us, or rose from the dead. When the apostle says that, *Being rich*, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich, will not the consideration of the riches we shall possess (see 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44, 45.) lead us to some idea of what the riches were of which he, as the apostle says, "*divested himself*?" (Phil. ii. 7. Improved Version.)\*

Thirdly, your correspondent asks, "Do they suppose that at his ascension he resumed his former rank, or was advanced to a higher one?" I answer, at his ascension he entered into the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, according to his prayer, John xvii. 5. but the reward of his obedience and sufferings is a different matter and consisted in having a name given above every name, in the possession of power and authority, in having angels, principalities and powers put in subjection to him, and in being appointed to be the judge of the quick and the dead.

In answer to the fourth query

\* On this subject I have treated more at large in two papers, printed some years since in the 3d vol. of the Protestant Dissenters' Magazine, which your correspondent may consult.

of your correspondent, "What passages of Scripture do they build their sentiments upon?" I need only refer him to my former letters in your Repository, where he will see a discussion of some of the passages on which *my* sentiments are principally founded.

Your's, &c.

JOHN MARSOM.

## BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

ON ACTS IX. 31.

[Continued from page 131.]

We learn from Tertullian, Eusebius, and Orosius, (see Lardner's Works, vol. vii. 232.) that a year or two after the resurrection of Jesus, Sejanus, the favourite minister of Tiberius, accused the Christians at Rome, and caused many of them to be put to death, and others to be banished from Italy into remote islands, where they might perish by the severity of the climate. The fact is stated by Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius, though they designate the sufferers under the general name of *Jews*. It was natural for the apostle Paul to allude to these transactions in his Epistle to the Romans; and we find him asking, chap. viii. 33. "Who shall accuse the chosen people of God? God acquitteth them; who is he that condemneth them? Christ has died for them, or, rather, he is risen for them, (that is, he is the advocate risen up to defend them, and to plead their innocence,) who is at the right hand of God, and who intercedeth in our behalf."

The Jewish historian affirms, that "two thousand of the Jews were put to death by the senate:" and the Roman writers say, that the rest were sent into distant places, where they might perish by cold and famine. To these facts the apostle significantly alludes: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or the sword? as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," &c. According to Josephus, the cruelties practised on the Christian Jews at Rome, were principally owing to a wicked Jew, who pretended to teach the wisdom of the Mosaic law. This man uniting with two others like himself, were concerned in the adultery of a celebrated woman, and, moreover, guilty of withholding the rich presents given by her to the temple at Jerusalem. This conduct, of course, gave occasion to the Roman people and other nations to blaspheme God and his holy law. Now, it is remarkable, that Paul expostulates with a leading man in the church at Rome, who appears to have committed the very crimes which Josephus ascribed to him, notwithstanding his pretended zeal against idolatry.



"Thou callest thyself a Jew, and professest to be a guide of the blind, &c. Thou who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou who preachest that a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou who sayest that a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, hast thou profanely robbed the temple? Thou who gloriest in the law, through transgression of the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is evil spoken of among the Gentiles through you." Chap. ii. 17—25.

The principal charge laid against the Christians was, no doubt, that they were enemies to Cæsar, and desirous to enlist under the banners of Jesus as a temporal king. And the sufferings which they encountered from this accusation, led them to hate, and in some instances to oppose, the measures of the Roman government. These were the circumstances which called for the following admonitions of the apostle, chap. xii. "Let every soul submit itself to powers in authority: for as there is no power, these powers are appointed by God. Whosoever, therefore, setteth himself against the power, opposeth the appointment of God; and such opposers will bring punishment upon themselves;" which may be paraphrased in the following words: "Conceiving the kingdom of the Messiah alone to be of divine appointment, some of you oppose the established government, disturb the public peace, and interrupt the administration of justice. But the supposition is as mistaken as it is pernicious. All power, to whatever hands entrusted, is commu-

nicated by the Disposer of human events, for the purpose of doing good, and this end it shall, under his Providence, eventually accomplish. And though pride, ambition and avarice, may abuse the authority invested in them, for the attainment of their respective objects, yet this very abuse Infinite Wisdom will overrule, and, in the end, render subservient to the introduction and establishment of that glorious liberty which awaits the children of God. Resist not, therefore, by violence or any other unlawful means, those who bear the sword of justice, but rather submit to their decisions, as, in effect, the decisions of an all-wise and good Providence." Such is the signification of a passage, perverted by policy and priestcraft into an engine, which, for many ages, irresistibly held mankind in oppression, ignorance and superstition.

Tiberius, as I have lately stated, issued an edict in favour of the Christians, in which he commanded the wicked only to be punished. The governors of the provinces must, to a certain extent, have complied with the letter of the imperial mandate, protecting the virtuous and peaceful believers, and punishing those who disturbed the public peace. This equitable conduct, as Eusebius well remarks, contributed greatly to the security and edification of the yet infant church, and forms the basis on which is grounded the following just tribute of praise to the civil magistrate. "These rulers are not a terror to the good, but to evil doers. Dost thou wish, then, not to be afraid of their power? Do what is right, and thou wilt be praised by it; for it is

God's minister for thy good. But if thou *do evil*, be afraid; because their power carrieth not the sword in vain, for it is the minister of God executing punishment upon every one that doeth evil." The same assertion is advanced by the apostle Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 13. with such similarity as could hardly take place, unless they had some fact in common, and well known, as the basis of their declaration.

The best and most effectual method of interpreting the N. T. is to come at the knowledge of *facts* from contemporary and subsequent writings, and then to examine its contents in connection with these facts. The above are a few instances of the great light which may be made to reflect on the sacred pages, from the works of Philo and Josephus. And, in this respect, the late Improved Version, as it pretends to be called, has little succeeded. Your correspondent N. is endeavouring to attract the attention of the public to that work by general encomiums on its merit. If his ability were equal to his inclination, the editors would have great reason to thank him; but he would do more essential service to that Version, if he were to publish a few instances where the taste and erudition of the authors have really improved upon all former translations. They stood on the shoulders of Wakefield and Newcome, and if they have not corrected many of their errors and supplied many of their defects, they can have little claim to praise.

When a passage depends on a *fact*, unknown or unattended to, the translator having nothing to guide him but his prejudice or

chance is almost sure to pervert it. We have abundant evidence to prove, that Christ and his followers were at first accused of being the enemies of Cæsar, and that this accusation was laid against them even in the senate of Rome, by Sejanus, the base minister of Tiberius. Now, if this were the case, how forcibly must these questions have been felt by the Christians in that city. "What shall we say therefore to these things? If God be for us, who can be against?—Who shall accuse the chosen people of God?" As if the apostle had asked, What, though the great men of the empire, or though the emperor himself, accuse them? Now observe, reader, how this passage stands in the Improved Version. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's chosen people? Shall God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Shall CHRIST that died, yea rather that is risen, that is also at the right hand of God, that intercedeth also for us?" On this last verse the reader will meet with a very learned note, which declareth that "*to intercede* is a word of a very general signification; and though Christ here and in Heb. viii. 25. is said to intercede for the church, these passages lay no just foundation for the commonly received opinions concerning the intercession of Christ." The meaning of which is briefly this: Though Christ intercedes, we have no grounds to believe in his intercession!! This, I believe, is a fair specimen of the notes. St. Paul, in alluding to the accusations against the Christians, had his mind now fixed on

the forms of administering justice: and hence, under the bold figure of an advocate rising up to plead the cause of his client, he describes the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension to the right hand of God. As we see the source of the figure, we may pronounce that the lan-

guage is strongly figurative, and must be interpreted with the same latitude as we interpret that wherein it is said, that the twelve apostles shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

THEOLOGUS.

## POETRY.

### INDEPENDENCE.

*By Mr. George Dyer.*

Mark the golden sun on high,  
Scatt'ring round a glorious ray.  
It shines, amidst the desert sky,  
Unrivall'd ruler of the day.  
So, where Independence reigns,  
Wide it spreads a sacred light;  
And soon majestic heights it gains,  
While Slav'ry slinks away from sight.

What tho' sinks awhile the sun?  
Long it gilds the western skies;  
And soon again its course shall run,  
Again with double splendour rise.  
Thus, a light in saddest times,  
Independence here shall reign;  
Or soon, if warming distant climes,  
With new-born glory rise again.

What tho' Israel's tribes so long  
Bow'd the knee at Baal's shrine?  
A thousand thousand hearts were strong,  
Nor durst from glory's course decline.  
No; they knew the patriot's part,  
Look'd with scorn on idol pow'rs;  
Their country's love inspir'd each heart,  
And that sweet love shall live in ours.

What tho' Grecians, now no more,  
Shone a nation brave and free?  
Yet some, while they the loss deplore,  
Still love the song of liberty.  
They, who have but heard of day,  
Freedom's day, revolt at night;  
And we, shall Briton's basely stray  
In darkness, born in glorious light?

Did Columbia strive in vain?  
Long in vain resist our will?  
No; great the fight, nor small the gain,  
And Britons love Columbia still.

She for Independence bled,  
Glorious death! and glorious prize!  
Muse, patriots, muse on heroes dead,  
And bid a proud ambition rise.

Did its neck our Albion bow?  
Still some gallant souls retire;  
And high from Cambria's mountain-  
brow,  
In lofty scorn they struck the lyre.  
Independence was their theme,  
Freedom, purest, noblest cause:  
Ah! never may we lightly deem  
Of freedom's claim, of honour's laws!

No! by Alfred's gen'rous name;  
No! by Edward, warrior brave;  
By lofty Hampden's love of fame,  
And noble Sidney's sacred grave:  
By those heroes' pains and wrongs,  
Who have struggl'd, fought and died,  
Shall Independence rule our songs,  
Shall only freedom be our guide.

Is there who his rights betrays?  
Whom not Independence charms?  
For him may poet wreath no lays,  
Nor beauty hail him to her arms,  
Gold and state and splendid name,  
Meanly take, nor envy we:—  
No!—your's be pomp and wealth and  
shame,  
And our's all-glorious liberty.

While we view yon lamp of fire;  
While we feel its genial ray;  
May Freedom British hearts inspire,  
May Honour rule with sov'reign sway!  
Hail! Independence, reign supreme;  
Our's be thy more than charter'd plan;  
And never will we Briton deem,  
Who spurns the noblest rights of man.



TO THE MEMORY OF A BE-  
LOVED MOTHER.

And is at length the period come,  
That thou hast left thy former home,  
For the dark dwelling of the tomb,

My mother?

Yes, I perceive the vacant place,  
But not behold thy pleasing face,  
Nor share thy filial, fond embrace,

My mother.

Yet memory reviews the past,  
The joys too exquisite to last,  
And binds thee to my heart more fast,

My mother.

And thee again I hope to meet,  
Our friendship to renew more sweet;  
Then with what rapture will I greet

My mother?

T. C. A.

## THE VILLAGER.

I.

At the door of my straw-cover'd cot,  
The rose and the jessamine blend;  
Each tree that o'ershadows the spot  
Is dear to my heart as a friend.  
Its course from the first noble donor,  
From father to son, can we trace,  
For ages the seat of fair honour,  
Content, independence and peace.

II.

The lark, to enliven our toil,  
High-mountaining in extasy sings;  
No medicines our appetites spoil,  
Health ever from industry springs.  
Kind fortune permits to extend,  
Tho' she give not superfluous store,  
A jug and a crust to a friend,  
A morsel to gladden the poor.

III.

The trav'ller at fast falling night  
The smoke of my cottage surveys,  
And journeys with bosom more light,  
Secure of refreshment and ease.  
In support and defence of the land  
That yields such enjoyment to me,  
Undaunted by menace I stand,  
To preserve uncorrupted and free.  
P.

TO A FRIEND ON HER BIRTH-  
DAY.

While slumber seals your peaceful eyes,  
For you, dear girl, my prayers arise:  
I wake to think that eighteen years  
Of your life's actions, hopes and fears,  
Are now past o'er, for ever gone,  
Scarce register'd by thought alone.  
O! blame me not, that I would seek  
To make those eighteen summers speak,  
And with a warning voice impart  
Some useful lesson to your heart:

Condemn me not, that on this day  
I frame a grave, not shortive lay.  
Think how our time appointed here  
Shortens with each revolving year;  
How soon to youth's bright morn suc-  
ceeds

A night which stays all active deeds,  
A eve of age, a night of death,  
A solemn stop to mortal breath!  
While yet you glow with youth and  
health,

With intellect's uncounted wealth,  
Hasten to earth's immortal king,  
And the heart's offering humbly bring;  
To Him whose bounteous hand bestows  
Each joy your artless bosom knows,  
Each pow'r your ardent mind conceals,  
Each grace your gentle heart reveals;  
To Him in whom we live and move;  
To Him who folds you round in love!  
To Him, from this blest hour, present  
That soul he gave, that life he lent.

Ah! think that ere this day's return  
Your vital fire may cease to burn,  
And all the Past and Future be  
Lost in one wide Eternity!  
O think! that but the present hour  
Belongs to man's uncertain pow'r;  
Since neither youth nor health may  
stand,

Secure from Death's unerring hand!  
But should God's gracious will decree,  
That you a lengthen'd age should see;  
That blest and blessing you should prove  
The sweetness of domestic love,  
And in a happy, virtuous race,  
The fruits of careful culture trace,  
O! then, with gratitude to heav'n,  
Confess the wondrous bounties giv'n;  
Own every gift a debt too vast  
For man to pay, while time shall last;  
And as your grateful eyes run o'er,  
As oft you "tremble and adore,"  
Still let this awful, blissful thought  
Be in your wakeful mem'ry wrought;—  
Whate'er I am, whate'er possess,  
Comes from that God who loves to bless;  
But yet, whose hands alternate bear  
The radiant crown which saints shall  
wear,

And chastisement's long-during rod:  
Let me then *live* and *die* to God!

A. M. P.

## WIFE, CHILDREN and FRIENDS.

[From the Morning Chronicle.]

If the stock of our bliss is in strangers'  
hands vested,  
The fund, ill-secur'd, oft in bankruptcy  
ends;

But the heart issues bills which are never protested,

When drawn on the firm of—Wife, Children and Friends.

Though spice-breathing gales o'er his caravan hover,

And around him Arabia's whole fragrance descends,

The merchant still thinks of the wood-bines that cover

The bow'r where he sat with—Wife, Children and Friends.

Though valour still glows in his life's dying embers,

The death-wounded tar, who his colours defends,

Drops a tear of regret, as he dying remembers

How blest was his home with—Wife, Children and Friends.

The day-spring of youth, still unclouded by sorrow,

Alone on itself for enjoyment depends;

But drear is the twilight of age, if it borrow

No warmth from the smiles of—Wife, Children and Friends.

## OBITUARY.

1810, May 19, at Daventry, aged 75, after a gradual decline, the Rev. THOMAS ROBINS, who had been for some years minister of the dissenting congregation, and divinity tutor of the academy, in that place, in which offices he succeeded the Rev. Dr. Caleb Ashworth, but had been long incapacitated for the

discharge of them by the loss of his voice. He was a man of distinguished ability and excellence, though but little known in the world, by reason of his excessive modesty and self-diffidence. We hope, in a future number, to gratify our readers with some memoirs of his life and character. S. P.

## INTELLIGENCE.

### GENERAL BAPTISTS' ASSEMBLY.

The annual meeting of the General Baptist denomination, was held on Tuesday, June 12, in the meeting-house, Worship Street, Moorfields. It was numerously attended and harmoniously conducted. We understand that the churches in the connection were generally reported to be flourishing. Four, viz. Lutton, Chatham, Lewes and Trowbridge, are in want of ministers. The funds of the Education Society are better than heretofore. The Unitarian church, at Soham, under Mr. Gisborne, was proposed for admission into the Assembly. Messrs. Wright, of Wisbeach, and Philpot, of Saffron Walden, were appointed messengers to the northern churches in the connection.

The sermon to the assembly was preached by Mr. George Smallfield. From Matth. v. 16. he showed "The Importance and Necessity of Learning to Christian Ministers." The preacher, with much courage and faithfulness, but at the same time with prudence and tenderness, pointed out the defect of the General Baptists in the education of ministers, and earnestly called upon them to remedy it, and to provide the means of keeping up their respectability, and of proving their right and title to a name adorned by Gale, Foster and Bulkley. The audience showed their accustomed candour in their approbation of the sermon; it was requested to be printed, and has since appeared: we scruple not to

recommend it, more particularly to the denomination for whom it was designed.

The ministers and representatives and their friends dined together, to the number of 60, at the White Hart Tavern, Bishopsgate Street, Mr. Sampson Kingsford, of Canterbury, in the chair. The evening was spent with much cordiality. The Unitarian Fund and the Monthly Repository were honoured by expressions of the approbation of the company. It was announced, with an appropriate

compliment from the chair to the author, that Dr. Toulmin, of Birmingham, is preparing to publish by subscription, *Four Discourses on Baptism*. Mr. Evans also informed the meeting, that, since the death of the widow of the late Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, a number of copies have been discovered of the *History of Baptism and of the Ecclesiastical Researches*, which are now on sale, together with a new memoir of the author, drawn up under the sanction of his family.

#### UNITARIAN FUND.

Many of our readers, we know, will look with much interest to our account of the anniversary of the Unitarian Fund, and we are happy to assure them that it was such a meeting as its warmest friends would have desired, numerous, respectable and harmonious.

It was held on the 13th inst. The religious service [as usual, at Parliament Court chapel] was introduced by the Rev J. Grundy, of Nottingham, who read the 20th chap. of Luke, and delivered the general prayer. He was followed by the Rev. Dr. Carpenter, of Exeter, who preached to the society and concluded the service. Dr. Carpenter's text was the Unitarian prophecy in Zechariah xiv. 9. *In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.* These words naturally led to some remarks upon the doctrine of the divine unity; the connection of this doctrine with the whole system of divine truth; and the duty and means of promoting it, and the prospect of its success. The discourse was heard with profound attention, and made a deep impression upon the auditory. An unanimous wish was expressed for its publication, and as the society makes a rule of not printing sermons on its own account, 500 copies were subscribed for by individuals: it is to be sold at one shilling. The congregation was larger than on any preceding occasion.

After the religious services concluded, the society proceeded to business. Mr. Rutt was called to the chair. The treasurer reported that there had been some extraordinary demands upon the Fund, the past year; but that, through the liberality of the public, the finances of the society were better than at the last anniversary. The Report of the Committee was then read, partly by the secre-

tary, and partly by the chairman; the length to which it was extended was owing, as we flatter ourselves, to the quantity of interesting matter which had grown under the hands of the committee. The substance of it will be given in our next number; we forbear, therefore, to anticipate it, and shall only say, that no part of it seemed to give livelier satisfaction than the information that Mr. Lyons, of Chester, was about to proceed immediately on a missionary tour of some weeks into Scotland, and that the whole was received with approbation by the subscribers. It may be added, that Mr. Lyons began his labours at Glasgow, on Sunday the 24th inst.

On the recommendation of the committee, the society resolved that a legal opinion should be taken, as to the best mode of securing such places of worship as may be purchased or erected or otherwise obtained by the Fund.

After the usual thanks to the gentlemen who had been in office the past year, the following election of officers took place for the year ensuing, viz.

Mr. John Christie, Mark Lane; Treasurer.

Rev. Robert Aspland, Hackney; Secretary.

#### COMMITTEE.

Mr. David Eaton, High Holborn;

— Thomas Freeman, Dyer's Court, Aldermanbury;

— Ephraim Burford, Stratford;

— Richard Taylor, Shoe Lane;

— John Towill Rutt, Goswell Street;

— John Wood, Hackney;

— William Hall, Crosby Square.

#### AUDITORS.

Mr. Ebenezer Johnston, Bishopsgate Street;

Rev. Thomas Rees, Paternoster Row.



In transacting the business of the society, the subscribers were animated by one heart and soul; and every thing said and done was, we believe, in the highest degree satisfactory to all present.

At four o'clock the members and their friends assembled at the London Tavern, and nearly Two HUNDRED persons sat down to dinner. Through the active exertions of ten gentlemen, who volunteered their services as stewards, the order and comfort of the company was better secured than is common in such large assemblies. Mr. James Young, of Hackney, was placed in the chair, which he filled with great advantage to the meeting. The following were some of the leading sentiments from the chair.

—1. The king and the principles that seated his family on the throne.—2. Religious liberty, and may toleration not abridge, nor penal statutes destroy it. Here Mr. Friend addressed the meeting, congratulating them upon the increase of liberal sentiment in the country. He had lately, he said, been asked by some of the leading Catholics to solve the following problem; how long, calculating from the divisions in the Houses of Parliament for several years past, it would be before the Catholic question would be carried? He found, he added, that the increment of toleration was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent per ann. and that in 12 years the friends of toleration in Parliament would be a majority. This mode of stating the subject occasioned much amusement.—3. The cause for which Servetus lost his life, Biddle his liberty and Lindsey his emoluments. Upon this being given, Mr. Rutt related the interesting and affecting story of the burning of Bartholomew Legate, for heresy, in 1612, by that solemn and cruel fool, James I. Legate held the same views as were afterwards entertained by Dr. Lardner. He was a man of strong sense, as well as of ardent piety and zeal. And though he lived in a fanatical period, not a single extravagancy was charged upon him; beyond that at least of his Unitarian heresy. James had tried to recover the he-

retic to "the holy mother church,"\* but failing in this, he consigned him to the flames, thus proving himself "a zealot of justice and a defender of the Catholic faith." It was, Mr. Rutt observed, a striking proof of the improvement of the times, that in 200 years from the time of Legate, 200 persons should have assembled by public advertisement for the avowed purpose of promoting the doctrine for which he perished, not far from the spot where he expired, the last of the English martyrs.—4. The memory of Dr. Priestley, and may his exile have been the means of conveying the seeds of truth to the new world.—5. The College at York, and may it be the nursery of future Lardners, Bensons, Taylors and Farmers. Here, Mr. Wood, the treasurer of the York Institution, addressed the meeting in a brief but pleasing speech.—6. Success to the projected monument to Mr. Locke, and may the advocates of rational Christianity never want a grateful memorial.

Besides these, which we have not taken in their order, some other sentiments were given, which called up the missionaries and Mr. S. Kingsford, Mr. J. Evans, Mr. Ebenezer Johnston, Mr. Grundy, Mr. Rees, the treasurer, Mr. Edward Taylor, of Norwich, and others.

The whole afternoon was a scene of intellectual animation, such as we never before witnessed. Satisfaction and delight were visible in every countenance. The best proof, perhaps, which we can give of the happiness of the day, is, that about £50 were obtained in new subscriptions.

We have been fearful in our successive annual reports of this lively meeting, of being carried by our feelings beyond the bounds of decorum; but we may be permitted to state, in our own justification, that many who have been attracted by our descriptions to this religious festival, have declared to us, that if former meetings equalled the particular one they may have joined, "the half was not told them."

\* Quoted from the form of the King's Writ for burning Legate.

## THE CHRISTIANS' PETITION.

[From the Morning Chronicle.]

Presented to the House of Commons, by Samuel Whitbread, Esq. on Friday,  
June 8, 1810.

To the honourable the Commons of this United Kingdom, in Parliament assembled, the humble petition of the undersigned Christians, in behalf of themselves, and others, who agree with them in considering absolute liberty of conscience respecting religion to be the unalienable right of all men, sheweth, That it is the duty of all men, to examine as diligently as may be in their power the doctrines of religion; and, after such diligent examination, to adopt and to profess what may appear to them to be the truth; and that, in performance of that duty, men ought not to be obstructed, or discouraged, or otherwise tempted to act hypocritically by any law, tending to bias them in the course of such examination of the doctrines of religion, by subjecting them, in the case of their dissenting from the doctrines of any established church, to suffer death by burning or otherwise; or to suffer any corporal or pecuniary punishment, or be injured in their reputation, by any disability, more or less disgraceful. That, your petitioners acknowledge, with high satisfaction, that, in the present reign, considerable progress has been made towards the full restoration of the rights of conscience, by the wisdom of Parliament and the benignity of the king, rescinding various laws, in whole or in part, which were violations of those rights: yet, since other penal laws, not less injurious to those rights, remain unrepealed; since some of these laws subject to corporal punishments or pecuniary penalties, others, as in the case of the Test Laws, passed in the reign of Charles II. subject to disgrace, disability, and privation of civil rights, persons whose only offence it is, that, in conformity with their duty, they have examined the doctrines of religion, and by such examination have been induced to embrace and to profess religious opinions different from the doctrines of the established church; your petitioners feel it to be their duty humbly, but earnestly, to remonstrate against the longer continuance of any of these intolerant laws; and they do, in conformity with the premises, expressly petition this Honourable House, that every such unjust law may be repealed,

and that the rights of conscience may thus be restored to all the subjects of this United Kingdom: at the same time, they declare to this Honourable House, that, if the Legislature of our country shall not feel themselves convinced, as your petitioners do, that every trace of intolerance ought to be immediately expunged from our statutes, yet, if the repeal or modification of any of our intolerant laws should now take place, particularly if the Test Laws, as far as they affect our military force by sea and land, should now be repealed, your petitioners would view with sincere gratitude any such measure, as a still farther advance towards the complete restoration of the rights of conscience, and at this crisis would consider it as having a salutary tendency to allay religious animosities, and to unite the great mass of the community, in a zealous defence of the empire, against the meditated attack of our gigantic and all-grasping enemy.

And your petitioners shall ever pray.

To the Christian's petition for liberty of conscience, the signatures annexed, by Roman Catholics, members of the church of England, and Protestant Dissenters, which are contained in sixteen duplicates, amount to, viz.

	Names.
In the duplicate from Sheffield	73
In that from Richmond	68
Newcastle	40
Hull	49
Leeds	156
Derby	183
Loughborough	60
York and Wakefield	29
Stockton	40
Nottingham	190
London	117
Exeter	109
Taunton	84
Gloucester	62
Birmingham	130
Norwich	170

The total amount of 16 duplicates 1560

N B. A duplicate from Manchester, containing 93 signatures, on account of informality, has been kept back.



## TOLERATION ACT.

It cannot be unknown to our readers, that Lord Sidmouth has lately agitated the subject of the increase of the Dissenters in the House of Lords. By returns moved for and obtained by him, it appears, that from the beginning of the year 1760 to the end of the year 1808, there have been 12,161 places registered for dissenting worship, and 3,672 preachers licensed.

These numbers will by no means exhibit a correct account either of places or preachers. Some houses have been registered in which preaching has been long discontinued; and some congregations have, in a course of years, occupied various places which have been all registered in succession. In some instances, rooms for Sunday-schools have been entered for security as meeting-houses.

We may, therefore, reduce the Return of places at least one half; but this will leave a number sufficient to show that the increase of dissent in the present reign has been great beyond all example. If the number of preachers seem not to correspond to the amount of the number of places, it should be considered that there are many dissenting ministers who have never taken the oaths; some, perhaps, from scruples of conscience, but more from inadvertence, or from the inconvenience in some particular situations attendant upon qualifying.

It was matter of wonder to indifferent observers, and of anxious expectation to Dissenters, what use would be made of the Returns when obtained. Lord Sidmouth has candidly explained his views. He professes to revere the Toleration Act, as the palladium of our religious liberties, and declares that his only wish is to prevent the abuse of the privileges which it confers; which, he thinks, must be considered equally injurious to the Dissenters themselves, to the established church, and to the State. In the next Session, he means to pursue the matter, and his object appears to be

threefold, first, to restrict the right of qualifying to actual ministers of congregations; secondly, to restrict it further to persons arrived at years of discretion; and, thirdly, to require persons demanding qualification to produce certificates, signed by two or three qualified ministers of their own denomination, of their character, ability and, we suppose, of their coming within the meaning of the aforesaid regulations.

There has, no doubt, been much abuse of the Toleration Act amongst the various orders of Methodists; and every real friend to religious liberty must wish to see such abuse prevented for the future. Perhaps, it would be sufficient for this purpose to confine the exemptions from parochial offices and military duties to pastors of churches and students for the ministry, not engaged in trade. Itinerant preachers might be left to be protected by the liberality of their respective denominations.

The project of certificates and of limiting licenses to persons of age, we think decidedly objectionable; and, as far as we have hitherto considered the matter, we would rather that all privileges should be withdrawn from dissenting teachers, and that they should be left on a level with the other subjects of the realm, than that they should hold immunities on terms which will degrade and cripple the next generation of preachers.

But the plan of the noble mover is yet in embryo. Before it is fully disclosed, it may be shaped to the liking of the general body of Dissenters. At any rate, we hope our brethren throughout the kingdom will keep a steady eye upon the subject; and be ready to unite, if necessary, in petitions to the Legislature and the throne, for the preserving entire of that glorious fabric of religious freedom which has been, and we trust ever will be, the noblest monument of British wisdom.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

We cannot avoid noticing the ingenuity of Mr JOHN MORISON, near Brooke Street, Holborn, who, having lost both his arms by the explosion of a cannon, has invented for himself a pair of artificial arms, adapted in a good measure to supply the place of those of which he has been bereaved. His success in one instance has induced him to make his plan generally known, and he offers

his assistance to persons, who may, from similar misfortunes, stand in need of artificial arms, legs, &c. The society for the encouragement of arts, manufactures and commerce, has examined the merits of his invention, and, upon the fullest deliberation, have adjudged him their silver medal and a premium of forty guineas.



## NOTICES.

The Rev. H. H. Baber, of the British Museum, has just published a new edition of WICLIF'S VERSION of the NEW TESTAMENT. Prefixed to this most ancient English Version of the New Testament, are Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Wiclif; and an Historical Account of the Saxon and English Versions of the Scriptures, previous to the 15th century; embellished with an elegant portrait.

A new edition of Dr. LAMONT'S SERMONS, on the most prevalent Vices, is in the Press, and will appear early in August.

The first volume of the Theological works of Mr. ARCHIBALD McLEAN, one of the pastors of the Baptist church, Edinburgh, which, from the unexpected demand, the proprietors were under the necessity of reprinting, is now finished, and ready for delivery. Volumes 5th and 6th, containing the Paraphrase and Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, will be immediately put to press, and the subsequent volumes will be published as speedily as possible.—The whole, when finished, will consist of eight or nine handsome volumes duodecimo. A new edition of his treatise on the Apostolic Commission is also just published.

## MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

*The Christian's Survey of the Political World.*

Living in a world, in which the political agitations of each day produce an effect on the general system, we cannot be totally uninterested in them; and though we belong to a kingdom which is not governed by the maxims of common policy, yet our temporary welfare is wrapped up with that of our fellow-creatures, who, from prejudices of education or want of better information, look upon the passing scene with much disquietude and anxiety of mind. From this uneasiness the Christian is happily relieved; as, notwithstanding the agitations and apparent perplexities in the outward affairs of men, he is fully convinced, that the whole is guided with infinite wisdom, and will terminate in the establishment of our Saviour's kingdom;—a kingdom, from which war and

tumult must be necessarily banished, and all will unite in the promotion of the general welfare, not in the arts of devastation and destruction. In this progress, he will see occasionally those traits which assure him, that moral improvement is gaining a due sway, and unhappy prejudices are weakened. He will not be deterred by the rejection of the Catholic petition in the House of Commons; for the question, like that of the slave trade, must be frequently discussed, before religious toleration is completely established. The word toleration, indeed, has no place in the mouth of a Christian. He knows not what it is to tolerate his brother in the maintaining of a religious opinion; for he is firmly convinced, that, as a Christian, he must grant unbounded liberty

to every man of every other persuasion, and that the victory of Christ is over the heart by arguments of love and truth, not by penal statutes and civil incapacities.

Still, it is a satisfaction that the minds of the men of this world are enlarged, and, in spite of the interested views of priestcraft, and the crafty insinuations of mistaken policy, the cause of religious toleration is gaining ground. The arguments against the catholic petition were weakly urged and weakly supported; and, on the division of the House, it appeared, that the Catholics had gained considerably since the last application. We shall hope that they will continue their efforts if necessary. But a new question has arisen, which may supersede their endeavours, and place religious liberty on its proper footing. Soon after the rejection of the Catholic petition, another appeared in favour, not of Catholics only, but of every subject of this realm; for we deem the members of the established churches of the island to be as much injured by the intolerant laws on our statute books, as those classes which are the object of civil censure and incapacities. These laws have a tendency to give the favoured party unchristian dispositions; to place them in an unfavourable situation for moral improvement; to make them haughty, overbearing and arrogant; to lead them to conceive that they have a peculiar merit and privilege, as being members of an established church; and thence they forget the great duty incumbent on them, as members of the great kingdom under that Master, whose disciples they pretend to be. The oppressor and the oppressed are, we trust, approaching nearer to each other, and will embrace with true Christian charity; the one pardoning the wrongs he has suffered, the other lamenting that he should have so departed from the true Christian spirit, as to introduce force in a question of religion.

A petition now lies on the table of the House of Commons, which was drawn up by that most venerable champion of civil and religious liberty, Mr. Wyvill, introduced by Mr. Whitbread, and seconded by Mr. Smith. It is called the Christian's Petition, and its prayer is truly Christian. It is to remove from our statute book every law which inflicts punishment on the maintainers of

religious opinions, or subjects to disqualifications those who happen to differ from the dogmas of the established church—dogmas, in which the members themselves are far from being united. It was too late in the session to have the question argued, but it must be a satisfaction to every liberal mind to know, that between sixteen and seventeen hundred persons concurred in this petition, of whom many were clergymen, and the others were of every description of religion professed in this kingdom. We hope that similar petitions will be presented in the course of next winter from all parts of the kingdom. It will be gratifying to see men every where lay aside their religious prejudices; and, as the church of England forms but a small portion of the Christians of this kingdom, and in that church are so many liberal and enlightened men of the same sentiment with the petitioners, we cannot doubt that in a short time the legislature will accede to a wish, that has in view only harmony and peace.

At the same time that religious liberty is thus gaining ground, and men are desirous of seeing the shackles fall from every hand, as far as the civil power is concerned, it becomes every sect to consider how far it indulges a true spirit in its own concerns. It matters not whether I am injured by the state or by a private sect, which, overstepping the bounds of Christian love, tears from me the affections of my family, and estranges from me the countenance of my friends. The laws of the sect may be as hurtful as those of the state; and the minister of a dissenting meeting-house may, in his little domain, be as bad as a pope. A Christian church is a voluntary society, and a man may be excluded from, as well as admitted into it. But, if that exclusion is attended with any violation of Christian love; if it tends to ruin a man in his temporal concerns, the members of that community have not the spirit of which they ought to be composed. These reflections arise from the circumstance of an excommunication being brought into the temporal courts of Ireland, and a popish bishop being subject to a verdict of damages, for the censures he had inflicted on one of his community. We do not know the precise merits of the case, but what we have seen of excommunications is odious in the extreme; and bishops of every description



whether popish or protestant, are justly brought under the lash of the law, if, under the pretext of their religion, they dare to devote to civil or eternal punishment, any one who happens to differ from them in opinion.

The discussion on civil rights has been carried on in the country by a continuance of petitions to the House for the liberation of Sir F. Burdett and Mr. Gale Jones, and for a reform in Parliament. All of them were drawn up in very strong terms, and some, in consequence, were rejected by the House; though, on comparing those that were received with those which were rejected, there does not appear by any means to have been an uniformity in the mode of proceeding. It was natural to be expected that the Middlesex petition would share this fate; since, on the meeting being called to consider the proceedings to be adopted, in consequence of the rejection of their last petition, they enumerated all the truths that had been previously so offensive, and concluded with the request that both the present and the last might be laid upon the table. The meeting was very numerously attended; the opposite party spoke freely their sentiments, but scarcely any hands were held up for them. In the House the petition was treated with little ceremony, and another from Sheffield was rejected at the same time. The latter came from a very large and respectable meeting, and spoke in strong terms; and, at the same time, an address was drawn up to Sir Francis Burdett, who has received a great number of similar addresses from all parts of the island.

The Common Council of London also presented a petition upon the same subject to the House, which gave an opportunity of shewing the world, that the Common Council and the Common Hall agreed in the same sentiments. The former body was not, nor was it expected to be so unanimous. The debate was animated and vigorous, but the petition was carried by only a small majority. When the nature of this body is considered, the triumph may be considered as very great, and we may fairly appreciate the sentiments of the country at large by those of the metropolis and the metropolitan county. This superiority was rendered more decisive by the attempts to counteract it; for in several parishes the select vestries, with the

clergymen at their head, drew up addresses with expressions of loyalty and abuse of their opponents, which, in general, were carried by very few persons, and, with all the exertions of influence, produced very few signatures.

In Southwark, also, a similar petition and address were carried unanimously; and in several places resolutions only were passed, as it was thought superfluous to address the House. The great question, however, remains undecided. Sir F. Burdett continued firm to his purpose, and took every step for bringing it into the courts of law, and the pleadings will certainly be interesting. Attempts were made in the House to prevent this appeal to the courts, but they were overruled; and it will be a satisfaction to the people of England to see the case well argued. An attempt was also made to liberate Mr. Gale Jones, but the House did not come to a division, it being the opinion that his stay in prison was owing to his own obstinacy, or what others would call manly perseverance. Indeed, the more we consider his case, the less ground can we see for the severity used towards him; and had not the House been hurried into its first opinion, we cannot conceive that he could have been doomed to such a punishment. Taking the privileges of the House in the most extensive sense, we cannot see in what manner he was guilty of a breach of them. He may have offended an individual member, but no indignity appears to have been intended, nor was any offered to the House.

The prorogation of Parliament put an end to the confinement of our two fellow subjects, and the inhabitants of the metropolis were eager upon this occasion to pay the deserved tribute of respect to the champion of Magna Charta. For this purpose, a grand procession was prepared to accompany Sir Francis on his liberation from the Tower. Great preparations were also made by the administration. The veterans in the Tower were changed for Scotch regiments, and forces were collected from all quarters to preserve the peace of the metropolis. On the 21st Parliament was prorogued. Earl Moira was in the Tower upon this occasion, and received advice of it by signal, and at half past three in the afternoon communicated to Sir F. Burdett the intelligence, that he was at liberty to quit the Tower. This permission



was immediately accepted, and Sir Francis took a boat at the Tower Stairs, went a little way down the river, and then mounted his horse to take the way to his country-house. A great assemblage was, at this time, collected on the Tower Hill, and the procession moved forward, not without some disappointment on the part of those who formed it. The people were pleased, however, with the liberation of their hero, and the evening concluded with a considerable illumination. Happily, the day passed without any pretext for the calling in of the numerous troops assembled on this occasion in and about London.

A melancholy incident marked the occurrences of this month, which remains as yet to be thoroughly explained. The apartments of the royal palace have been defiled by an attempt at assassination, and a murder has been committed. The whole wears a most mysterious appearance. Between two and three in the morning, the Duke of Cumberland was awaked by a blow on his head, and in getting from the bed to his door the blows were repeated. On calling his servants and alarming the house, it appeared that he had received several wounds with a sharp instrument, and his sabre was found bloody, lying in the room. A serjeant and some privates went over the house, and, in one room, they found one of the duke's pages weltering in his blood, with his throat cut from ear to ear, and it appeared that he could not have been long dead, and some of the servants, from a gurgling noise they heard at the door, thought that he must have been alive a short time before they entered the room. The depositions of the duke, the serjeant, several privates, and the servants of the house were taken by a police magistrate, and laid before the coroner's jury summoned to inquire into the death of Scillis, the page, which, after a very long examination, they adjudged to be suicide. The finding of his slippers and dark lanthorn in a closet adjoining to the duke's apartment, led naturally to the surmise that he was the assassin, and his memory as yet remains tainted with the worst of crimes. To account for his conduct, and for the circumstances in the house, is very difficult, on every supposition; at the same time, the use of the duke's sabre is such a circumstance as precludes us from looking out of the house for the

author of the mischief. The duke is gradually recovering of his wounds, and the mystery may in a future time be developed.

The Continent affords but little matter for observation. The French emperor pursues his usual course, but we doubt whether his edicts against commerce have any great effect. The fact is, that the port of London is filled with French corn, French wines, and French brandies, and what is more, the manufacturers of silk in this country find it necessary to enter into an association to prevent the introduction of French silks, which would destroy their trade. Considerable seizures of this latter article have been made, but trade is a thing which cannot be forced, and which will break through every obstacle. Whether England or France make laws, it matters not, when the advantage to be gained by the breach of them is very great, and the line of coast is too extended to be completely protected. The French, it seems, can afford to give us a superior article at much less than half the price, and of course an exchange will be formed for their silks against our muslins. The contest between the two countries then is to export as much as possible of its own goods, and to import as little as possible of its neighbours. This is the mistaken policy of the times; but, when we consider the advantages that would be mutually obtained, if there were no more barriers between kingdom and kingdom, than between county and county, we may wonder that countries cannot be brought to see their mutual interest is better consulted by a stricter union between neighbouring than foreign territories.

Buonaparte has visited various parts with his new bride, and after receiving the congratulations of the Low Countries and Picardy, returned to Paris to the festivities of that city. But his mind is not to be averted from great pursuits. The objects he has in view are not easily detected; but as yet nothing has transpired against Turkey, and Spain is the only place which calls for his attention. In that unhappy country immense armies are still in motion, and, every day, news is expected of an engagement between the English forces under Lord Wellington, and those of the French under Massena. So little is known of the relative strength of the two armies,

that conjectures can be grounded only on the general conduct of the French on these occasions, and they are not likely to attack the English without such a superior force as in their apprehension must bear down all opposition. In this case, our army must retreat to Lisbon, and Portugal cannot be retained. But the French have not yet gained possession of Cadiz, and a considerable time will elapse before the decisive blow is struck.

Buonaparte's politics have had a good effect in America, and the intercourse is happily renewed between us and that country. Sharp debates in Congress preceded this measure, but no alternative was left but that of a free intercourse or none at all; for as to the idea of going to war, the good sense of America saw the folly of it, if it was possible to be avoided. By renewing the intercourse, both countries are gainers, in the introduction of articles of which each stands in need; and it is particularly beneficial to us, as the American flour will be a grand resource to prevent a rise in our corn markets. The prospects of the year are said to be bad, but France has poured in immense supplies of corn, and the aid from America may guarantee us from any considerable apprehension. Bread, however, cannot be lowered considerably; for its rise, in common with that of other articles, depends chiefly on the state of taxation.

The conclusion of the sessions was attended, as usual, with a great pressure of business, too much to allow the necessary attention to every point; and this evil might be avoided by a simple process by making the grant of the supplies the last matter that is agitated before the breaking up of the House. The debates were not, however, interesting: that on the Catholic question was car-

ried on several days, but nothing new was advanced. Grattan distinguished himself by his eloquence, and his supporters by many manly appeals to the best feelings of the mind; but we may in general observe, that there was not enough of Christianity on either side; the appeal was not sufficiently strong to the precepts of our Master, and upon this ground alone can true toleration, or rather religious liberty, be established. The imprisonment of Sir F. Burdett and Gale Jones occasioned some debates; on the former, with respect to the mode of proceeding in defence of the House of Commons, in which some unguarded language was used as to the judges, whose independence is not to be beat down by either branch of the legislature, and the threats of a House of Commons would be more dangerous than the bribe of a king: on the latter head it was moved, that Mr. Gale Jones should be no longer confined, as the punishment had more than expiated the offence. But it was not allowed, and the motion fell to the ground without a division, it being alleged that his continuance in prison depended on his own obstinacy. Thus, in former times, the death of the martyr was attributed to his own obstinacy. The pouring out of a glass of wine only, and partaking of a sacrifice before the image of the Gods, would have saved him the tortures of a painful death. But, whether it is for religious or political liberty, the martyr is entitled to our gratitude; and we cannot attach any blame to Mr. Jones for persevering in that course which he thought to be his duty; and we should have praised the House of Commons, if, in the first instance, it had not attended to the complaint, and, in the second, if it had taken the side of compassion, not of extreme severity.

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The List of the Divinity Students educated under Dr. Rotherham was too late for the present Number, but shall appear in the next. Our correspondents are informed, that we are obliged to make up the Magazine at the very beginning of the month.

We do not approve of personal allusions to preachers in communications for the public eye; but we second the wish of one of our correspondents, that some one would favour us with a paper on the love of God, on Unitarian principles.

We thank "One of the Unlearned" for his friendly epistle. He may rest assured, that, whenever we insert sceptical arguments or objections, it is with the hope of their being answered and refuted by our correspondents. We ourselves, however, cannot undertake to fill up the controversial part of our work.

We are obliged to a respected correspondent for his suggestion of the propriety of publishing a scale of prices of advertisements; this we shall hereafter do; but, in the mean time, we beg leave to state, that there is no publication

of equal circulation which advertises on such low terms as our's. It is, perhaps, not known to those of our correspondents who have entreated us to advertise certain works and institutions gratuitously, that magazine advertisements, as well as others, pay a heavy duty to government.

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ERRATA in the last Number.

- P. 257. col. 2. at the bottom, for "theological," read *philosophical*.  
— 258. col. 1. l. 8. of Obituary, for "predeliction," read *predilection*.  
— 260. col. 2. l. 16. after "enabled," supply *them*.